

Her onginþ seo boc:

On the loss and retention of grammatical gender in Early Middle English

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TIIVISTELMÄ

Tutkielma käsittelee kieliopillisen suvun säilymistä myöhäisessä muinaisenglannissa (*Late Old English*) ja varhaiskeskienglannissa (*Early Middle English*). Tutkielman tavoitteena on päätellä, kuinka kieliopillinen suku säilyy kolmessa muinaisenglannin/varhaiskeskienglannin aikakautta edustavassa tekstissä. Lähdeaineisto on valittu edustamaan aikaa (1150-1225), jolloin kieliopillisen suvun on sanottu kadonneen englannin kielestä. Lähdeaineisto myös edustaa kahta eri tekstilajia, ja tarjoaa siten aineistoa niiden väliseen vertailuun.

Aineistosta on analysoitu nominien päätteitä, demonstratiivipronomineja sekä anaforisia persoonapronomineja, joissa substantiivien kieliopillinen suku näkyy. Osa anaforisista viittauksista on selitettävissä personifikaatiolla, jolloin elottomiin objekteihin tai käsitteisiin on liitetty inhimillistäviä piirteitä.

Tutkimuksen perusteella kieliopillinen suku säilyy vielä joissakin muodoissa 1200-luvulle saakka. Merkittävää on aineistossa esiintyvä runsas vaihtelu ja pyhimyselämäkertojen ja lääketieteellisen tekstin väliset erot.

Asiasanat: kielihistoria, keskienglanti, muinaisenglanti, historiallinen muoto-oppi – kielitiede, kieliopillinen suku

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Finnish summary / Suomenkielinen tiivistelmä

List of abbreviations

OE = Old English

LOE = Late Old English

ME = Middle English

EME = Early Middle English

AS = Anglo-Saxon

LWS = Late West Saxon

PDE = Present Day English

Fr. = French

Lat. = Latin

ON = Old Norse

Gr. = Greek

masc. = masculine

fem. = feminine

neut. = neuter

pl. = plural

sg. = singular

pron. = pronominal, pronoun

adj. = adjectival, adjective

NP = noun phrase

N = number

nom. = nominative

acc. = accusative

gen. = genitive

dat. = dative

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1. Introduction

The topic of the thesis is the loss and retention of grammatical gender in Late Old English (LOE) and Early Middle English (EME). Grammatical gender, as defined by Fodor (1959), is based on syntactic congruence of sentence elements (Fodor 1959:2, 8). In Present Day English (PDE) the third person pronouns have a three-way distinction between *she*, *he* and *it*. Essentially these pronouns differentiate between female and male beings (particularly human) and 'sexless' beings, or animate (female/male) and inanimate, but no gender distinctions are made in the nominal forms (except for suffixes such as *-ess*, e.g. waitress) or in the forms of the modifiers. The few instances where grammatical gender can be said to survive in PDE are, for instance, anaphoric references to nouns such as 'ship', which is sometimes referred to as 'she'.

The process whereby the distinctions were lost is also sometimes referred to as the "gender shift", meaning a shift from morphological or grammatical gender to semantic or 'natural' one. Gender, unlike, for instance, deixis or negation, is not an essential category universally but rather an optional one, which is shown by the fact that not nearly every language has gender as a grammatical category (Fodor 1959:196; Samuels 1977:49); there are languages which either never had it (such as Finnish) or have had it but subsequently lost it (for instance, English). Furthermore, the realisation of the grammatical category in languages which have it can be highly divergent; for instance, 'moon' in modern German and in Old English (*der Mond*, *se mona*) is masculine, in modern French it is feminine (*la luna*).

There are various explanations for the reasons of the shift and of the exact nature of it. *Gender* (which is a grammatical category) and *sex* (which is a semantic category) are expressed in the same vocabulary and, in many explanations, the formal categories of gender in language and biological categories of sex in the world merge. Therefore, speakers and their attitudes as well as the overall linguistic context should be taken into account; as the decay of the grammatical gender is sometimes said to have allowed for reinterpretations of the system and a reanalysis of the gender/sex parameters.

In order to gain a fuller picture, the change will be contextualised and individual cases and divergences from the regular patterns will be compared to general historical principles. Instead of purely technical or purely sociolinguistic explanations, a combination of language-internal (system-based; phonologically determined/inherent to the structure of the language) and language-external (speaker-based; open to cultural and social forces affecting language change) explanations will be employed (Curzan 2003:47-48; see also Dorian 1993:143).

This introductory chapter will provide a background to the study of grammatical gender by introducing the system as it stood in Late Old English. Thereafter the discussion will handle previous studies of the field and different theories concerning grammatical gender and the subsequent loss of it in English. The methods and structure will also be introduced.

1.1 Previous studies on grammatical gender in Old and Middle English

Old English (OE) was a predominantly synthetic language, in which the nouns, adjectives and demonstratives were inflected for case, gender and number. Grammatical gender is not necessarily based on semantic properties and does not therefore necessarily represent the real-world denotata of nouns; there are, for example, no semantic reasons for *stan* 'stone' to be masculine or *wif* 'woman' to be a neuter (Lass 1992:105).

In OE the gender of the nouns was not necessarily predictable from their morphological forms but was determined more by the form of the attributes and pronouns than by the form of the noun itself- (there were some exceptions, e.g. the weak masculine suffix *-a* or strong feminine *-nes(s)*; but many of the inflectional endings of different genders/cases also overlapped).

The grammatical and natural gender of nouns referring to people frequently coincided, that is, nouns referring to males are largely masculine and nouns referring to females often feminine (although not without regular exceptions, e.g. *mægden* 'maiden',

OE neut.) (Curzan 2003:62). Therefore determining the stability of the grammatical gender system in Late Old English is more complex. Kitson (1990) also argues that grammatical gender was a dialectal variable already in the OE period, which would contribute to the fluctuation in the system. As animate nouns, however, were more likely to follow natural gender, the pattern was eventually reflected in the inanimate nouns as well.

Although the grammatical gender agreement system remained healthy throughout the Old English period, the anaphoric pronouns showed some variation towards the end of the period, agreeing with natural rather than with grammatical gender (Curzan 2003:84). Thus the development in the usage of grammatical gender can be perceived separately within the NP and outside of it.

The disappearance of grammatical gender was not a straightforward development. There is some fluctuation already in the OE period, and different dialects developed in diverse manners, showing inconsistent patterns in their usage (Curzan 2003:122). The dearth of evidence from the eleventh and twelfth centuries makes it difficult if not impossible to trace the initial stages of the process.

The phonological changes and the levelling of the final endings contributed to the loss of grammatical gender, but mere phonological erosion does not explain how case and gender as concordal categories disappeared (Mustanoja 1960:43; Lass 1992:105). Lass argues that here was in fact a deeper semantic or grammatical motivation, and larger contexts have to be taken into account in considering the loss of grammatical gender (Lass 1992:105).

The extralinguistic explanations emphasise the sociohistorical circumstances in addition to the purely intralinguistic factors, as linguistic developments can be seen reflecting social and cultural developments, not as separate processes. Sociolinguistic explanations take account of the contact with Norse, French and Latin, while in more technical explanations the shift is often explained as a direct result of the simplification of the inflectional system and the loss of inflectional endings.

There were extensive language contacts in the Old and Early Middle English periods, notably with Old Norse, Norman French and Latin. All these languages had a grammatical gender system, and the gender assignments for individual nouns often differed from those in OE, causing possible confusion to the speakers. The

Scandinavian influence was particularly strong in the northern dialectal areas already in the OE period. The Norman invasion in 1066 brought the impact of French, which affected more the written varieties, particularly in the south. Latin, on the other hand, was the *lingua ecclesiastica* commonly used for writing. In considering the extent of language contact, it is also important to distinguish between spoken and written varieties. As there was no universal written standard variety in Early Middle English, the spoken language is reflected in the written varieties. However, most of the scribes were writing in monastic settings and were by implication more or less educated. To what extent the individual scribes were familiar with written Latin or French is often difficult to determine; or whether they were mono-, bi- or even trilingual.

The Scandinavian influence was particularly considerable in the Danelaw areas. The arguments for language mixing stem from the fact that, as Old English and Old Norse shared common roots and were at least to some extent mutually intelligible, the speakers would have deleted the incompatible inflectional endings to achieve better understanding amongst the speakers of the respective languages.

While there is a consensus that language contact indeed did have an effect on the grammatical structures of English, there is debate over the extent of that influence, and on the exact sources. These problems will be further addressed in section 4.2.1 below.

Some of the forms which on surface might be interpreted to represent survival of grammatical gender might on closer examination turn out to be examples of more complex emerging syntactic or semantic patterns, as some of the inflectional endings came to mark case across gender. The ambiguity in the remaining forms of the endings led to reinterpretation and the gender congruence became a secondary consideration to speakers (Jones 1988:18). The question whether gender loss was simultaneous in and outside of noun phrase will also be addressed. The anaphoric pronouns were more likely to display natural rather than grammatical gender already in Old English.

Like many major structural simplifications, gender loss began in the north, and by around 1200 the old system is in considerable disrepair in most dialects, and apart from Kent, the shift to natural gender was pretty well complete by the end of the century (e.g. Curzan 2003:122-124). However, the southern dialects were in general markedly more conservative and in the mid-thirteenth century the West Midland dialect still preserves some traces of the old genders in non-sex items where the marked determiners were still

distinctive.

The shift towards the Modern English system in which the natural sex of the object can be said to be the primary or sole determinant started in the Late Old English/Early Middle English period. Thus the focus shifted from the grammatical properties of the nouns to the real-world properties; objects that were male or female agreed with the 'natural' gender, i.e. took masculine and feminine pronouns and concord respectively, whereas all other objects were classified as sexless or neuter (Lass 1992:106).

The change was not simultaneous or homogenous in all parts of the country. Rather, there were considerable dialectal differences in the simplification process spreading from the northern and East Midlands dialects towards the southern dialects. Curzan (2003) has conducted a preliminary corpus study on the dialectal spread, which suggests that while the process was largely completed in the North and East Midlands by the thirteenth century, the southern and Kentish dialects were more conservative and resistant to change and preserve traces of the grammatical gender system until the fourteenth century (Curzan:122-123; see section 1.3.1 for further discussion). Thus, the gender variation has been shown to have originated at an early stage in the language; and the completion of the process lasted for centuries.

The difference in the surface manifestations of grammatical gender can be divided to noun-phrase internal (nouns, relative pronouns, adjectives, demonstrative pronouns, possessives, articles, numerals) and noun-phrase external (agreement between nouns and verbs and anaphoric pronouns) (Baron 1971:120). The importance of distance between the anaphoric pronoun and the antecedent noun has frequently been discussed and “assumed but not proven” (Curzan 2003:98). However, it seems to be clear that the breakdown of the grammatical gender system was initially manifested in the anaphoric pronouns already in the Late Old English period (see Jones 1988:10, Curzan 2003:84, 86).

The Old English case system is intertwined with the grammatical category of gender. Already in LOE there was a tendency to shift nouns to the masculine gender, particularly the masculine a-stem, which was the commonest noun-type. With the restructuring of the system, the masculine gender could be seen to represent the dominant category, which tended to attract nouns of obscure gender as well as new loan-words (Lass 1992:108). On the other hand, a tendency to move nouns to the neuter

category has also been noted.

The *masculinisation* and *neuterisation* tendencies, that is, tendencies for the nouns to assume masculine or neuter gender, are repeatedly discussed. Mustanoja (1960:51) argues in favour of the masculinisation theory; since the Late Old English period, masculine was seen as the default category for nouns. Welna (1980) argues for *Genuswechsel*, 'transfers' of nouns from one gender to another, which to some scholars suggest a retention of the old principle, brought on by contact with French and Latin (Welna 1980:400). Curzan, however, presents counterarguments to the theory, arguing that neuter rather was conceived of as the default category particularly for inanimate antecedent nouns (Curzan 2003:93).

The remodelling of the OE pronominal system further contributed to the variation, as the *hine/him* distinction was lost with the merging of the dative and accusative in most dialects into a general object-case (*him*) (Lass 1992:118). In addition to the loss of distinction in the case markers, the personal pronouns indicate confusion also in the gender attribution, as *his* and *him* could both be interpreted as neuter as well as masculine (Curzan 2003:90). Thus, analysing the pronominal anaphoric references proves ambiguous.

Mitchell (1994) discusses the existence of colloquial varieties of Old English; according to him, the instability and the subsequent changes in the system would thus be due to the spoken varieties not conforming to the written standard, which demonstrates a full grammatical gender system (Burchfield 1985; according to Mitchell 1994:164). Thus, instead of an abrupt breakdown of the system, there would have been continuity throughout Late Old English and Early Middle English periods (ibid.:170; see also Curzan 2003:123).

Once the system had started to fluctuate, the impact of foreign languages, be it Scandinavian, French or Latin, was further strengthened by analogy. Other affecting factors might have included Christian symbolism and allegory, affecting the gender assignment of nouns commonly associated with certain sex affiliations¹ (Mustanoja 1960:48). Some nouns such as *sun* (OE fem.), *moon* (OE masc.) and *star* (OE masc.) retain their original OE gender assignment until fourteenth century, although Mustanoja

¹ For example feminine reference of 'church' (OE *cyrice*, f.) "a natural association to the church as Bride of Christ) (Mustanoja 1960:48).

remarks that this might be due to OE or classical literary tradition rather than to be seen as an example of retention of grammatical gender (Mustanoja 1960:46). Therefore, personification should be distinguished from supposed relics of a grammatical gender system, and be treated on its own right as literary decisions of the individual scribes (Curzan 2003:117-118).

Creolisation theories will also be discussed. ME is sometimes said to display many characteristic features of modern creoles such as the loss of inflectional endings, the loss of grammatical gender, and a significant influx of borrowed words (see particularly Bailey & Maroldt 1977; Poussa 1982).

1.2 Methods and structure

The primary material to be used in the study consists of two saints' lives, the lives of Margaret in MSS Cambridge Corpus Christi College 303 and Oxford Bodleian Library Bodley 34 PD and a collection of medical recipes, *Peri Didaxeon*, in MS British Library Harley 6258b. My objective is to look at these texts in order to determine to what extent the natural gender agreement has prevailed over the grammatical gender system. The thesis is based on the hypothesis that there are still remnants of grammatical gender in the twelfth and thirteenth century texts. The different variables and affecting factors need to be examined. The choice of the data offers a point of comparison. The two text-types – saints' lives and medical recipes – can be thought to lie at different ends of a continuum. While the saints' lives represent a more literary genre, religious prose, the medical text of *Peri Didaxeon* is, in comparison, exceedingly simple and straightforward, with no extraneous material beside the essential recipes. On the other hand, the texts themselves have also features in common. All are based on a textual tradition deriving from the OE West Saxon standard; all ultimately derive from Greek via Latin, and, while the two different versions of the life of Margaret in particular offer some diachronic perspective, the texts/manuscripts date from approximately the same period, 12th/13th c. The study will thus focus on examining not the earliest seeds of

change but rather the process and the continuation or discontinuation in the grammatical gender patterns in this period.

In Chapter 2, the data will be introduced and historical and social background will be provided to support the discussion.

Chapters 3 and 4 will provide the analysis of the data. The analysis has been divided into two parts; Chapter 3 will introduce the data and discuss the material in detail, while the emphasis in Chapter 4 will be on the various theories connected with grammatical gender as introduced in Chapter 1, and in re-evaluating them on the basis of the analysis of the data. The three texts will all be analysed individually and comparisons will be made between them. Chapter 3 is arranged according to parts of speech; thus, nominal forms and the forms of the modifiers (determiners, demonstratives, adjectives and numerals) as well as anaphoric pronouns are discussed separately. Where appropriate or practical, absolute numbers of occurrences and/or percentages have been counted to determine the proportion of particular forms or features in the data.

The analysis will, in addition to single instances, take into consideration the larger contexts; syntactic, textual and historical. The examples presented are not simply analysed as instances of grammatical structure which either appear or not, but the reasons lying behind those features will be taken into account. These include for instance personification, textual context (e.g. proximity of similar nouns affecting), extra-linguistic factors (such as language contact) and influence of the scribes.

The abbreviations used to refer to the data are C303 (Life of St. Margaret in MS Cambridge Corpus Christi College 303), PD (Peri Didaxeon, MS British Library Harley 6258b) and B34 (Life of St. Margaret in MS Oxford Bodleian Library Bodley 34). Thus, even though the abbreviations stand for the manuscripts (for the saints' lives), they are here only intended to refer to those individual texts used as data in this study, not the manuscripts as a whole or to any other texts they may contain. The page and line numbers in the examples refer to the editions used as the main sources for the texts².

² Treharne (ed.) 2000 (St. Margaret, MS Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 303); Cockayne (ed.) [1866] 1961 (Peri Didaxeon, MS British Library Harley 6258b); Millett, Wogan-Browne (eds.) 1990 (Seinte Margarete, MS. Bodley 34).

2. Data

The previous chapter dealt with grammatical gender and the various theories concerning the origin and development of grammatical gender in Old and Middle English. This chapter will provide historical background to hagiographical writing or saints' lives and to medical writing in medieval England and examine the problems and issues relating to these particular genres. I will also briefly examine the origin and development of the legend of Margaret and the context of scientific and medical writing in the Middle Ages.

The texts used for the analysis, two versions of the Life of St. Margaret (MS Cambridge Corpus Christi College 303, MS Bodley 34) and *Peri Didaxeon* (MS British Library Harley 6258b), are studied with consideration to historical, social and linguistic context. This includes relating the texts studied to the contemporary and changing historical situations, such as language contact, synchronic (dialectal) and diachronic change. The previous chapter provided general and more specific linguistic background to the analysis. In this chapter the focus is on the literary, textual and manuscript context.

As the texts that will be examined are a part of a certain genre, the features possibly affecting the linguistic usages should be taken into account; whether a particular genre such as hagiography, the nature of which falls into the middle of religious and literary materials, is traditionally or by nature more conservative than for instance purely literary or scientific texts (see Scragg 1996:225; Proud 2000:122). Medical writing, a genre rather far removed from hagiography, is represented by the third text in the data, *Peri Didaxeon*. In addition to being at various ends on the spectrum with regard to subject-matter, the stylistic and linguistic considerations differ considerably from those of the saints' lives. The factors contributing to the differences and problems presented by the genre differences will be further discussed in section 4.2.4 below.

The social context of most extant texts from this period is almost by definition

clerical (see Frankis 1986:175). Most of the manuscripts, whether religious in subject-matter or not, were written in a monastic setting by clerical scribes; only a small proportion of population was literate, and those who were, were often clerics.

The reason for choosing these very texts is that they represent various stages in the transition period from Old to Middle English. The time span of the texts covers the period often characterised as the transitional period, with C303 dating from mid-twelfth century, PD dating from c.1200 and B34 from c. 1225. This offers an opportunity for a diachronic comparison. At the same time, the divergent nature of the texts allows for a comparison the differences between two genres.

Finally, what ties together such diverse data as a whole, as far away from each other as the genres of medical writing and hagiography, is the connection between saints and healing. Saints were commonly associated with miracles and with miraculous healings, and the lives often provide medical details which must have been drawn from contemporary medical knowledge (Rubin 1974:70-71).

2.1 Hagiography

The life of a saint was in OE one of the most popular narrative forms (Woolf 1966:64). The scribes added or deleted scenes and parts, and even when following a Latin exemplar they modified the material and particularly the language to suit the requirements and traditions of the vernacular versions. The sensational aspects of the texts and the exciting descriptions would have attracted the lay audience as well (Woolf 1966: 60-61) and perhaps saints' lives could even be seen as the yellow press of the Middle Ages.

Hagiography, in the strict sense of the word, relates to studies of saints. More generally defined, it refers to instructive literature about saints and other biblical and exemplary figures (Brinegar 2002:277). In the early church, lists of Christian martyrs and the anniversaries of their death were kept. When these lists were expanded to include more details, such as the place of martyrdom (e.g. Margaret of Antiochia), they became known as martyrologies. The most influential early martyrologies included

those of Bede and Jerome or Hieronymian martyrologies (fifth century). In England the most influential early martyrologies included the *Old English Martyrology* (ninth century) (Brinegar 2002:284). The lists were read out in liturgies, and added to, eventually expanding to detailed accounts of saints and their sufferings, which were often arranged in collections. Initially these compilations were loosely arranged, but later were arranged according to the dates of the saints' feast days, and became known as *legendaries* or *passionaries* (Brinegar 2002:278-9).

Until the end of eighth century, saints' lives or *vitae* were mostly written in Latin. The Latin tradition of prose lives was translated and transformed into traditional Old English poetical form (Woolf 1966:38). Ælfric, one of the earliest and most influential of Old English hagiographers, mostly translated or adapted the material for his 'Lives of Saints', a series of homilies arranged according to the feast days of the saints (Brinegar 2002:281-3).

The copyists did not necessarily substantially alter or edit the older texts but attempted to preserve the form and structure of the copied texts. Literary texts, however, are prone to be altered to some extent, and the linguistic forms were sometimes quite far removed from the scribes' own language either due to diachronic or dialectal differences. Therefore, the later copies of earlier texts often show a mixture of different linguistic forms.

The tradition of vernacular composition seems to have been in decline after the Norman Conquest; in the eleventh century more copies of older lives than original compositions survive, and only nine vernacular manuscripts containing *vitae* survive from the twelfth century. However, earlier texts continued to be read and copied and the Latin legends continued to be popular and there seems to have been a sustained interest in the older vernacular texts (Proud 2000:117-118,120, 122; Irvine 2000:41). There was an awareness of and interest in the older forms of the vernacular; for example, the MS Bodley 34 version of the Margaret legend refers to *ald englis*. Nevertheless not all hagiographical writing consisted of copying the older texts. Collations were compiled as well as simply copied in the twelfth century, and new material was composed and added to these compilations (Irvine 2000:42-44). For instance, the C303 version of the Margaret-legend is thought to date from the twelfth century.

Although it is not always altogether clear what the intended audience for the

vernacular lives was or how they were used, some information can be inferred from the way the lives were written, or the places of composition or copying (see Proud 2000:117). In early Northumbria hagiographical writing was primarily directed to monastic audience; the Mercian verse versions, however, were apparently intended for a wider audience, comprising of both lay and monastic people. The Old and Middle English versions of the legend of Margaret are varyingly adapted to suit the needs and preferences of the vernacular audiences (see Magennis 1996:32-33); the hagiographical writing adapted the traditional OE forms, and the familiar form of heroic poetry would have made it seem more familiar to the lay audiences (Woolf 1966:39).

Virginity is a major theme in hagiographical writings and for the virgin saints' lives such as Margaret, nuns and anchoresses were presumably an important target audience. The description of the persecution of these heroic women and their sufferings would have provided a role model for the nuns and anchoresses reading these texts (Woolf 1966: 45-46). As it was considered more appropriate for women to read and write in English rather than in Latin, it would be natural to translate and compose these texts in the vernacular (Millet, Wogan-Browne 1992:xx). The emphasis on and the idealisation of virginity apparent in these vernacular legends of virgin martyrs is not found in the Latin texts to the same extent.

Some of the *vitae* might have been intended for public delivery, for instance, at the feast day celebration of a particular saint. For instance in B34 *Seinte Margarete* is referred to as "that holy maiden we commemorate today"³. Sometimes the texts address the audience directly, or refer to the expected kind of audience. In addition to virgins, for whom Margaret could have acted as a role model, it also addresses "all those who have ears to hear, widows with the married and maidens above all"⁴. (D'Ardenne 1955:3; Millet and Wogan-Browne 2002: xiii).

2.1.1 The legend of St. Margaret

Nothing certain is known of the origin and early development of the legend of Margaret, known as Margaret of Antiochia. No historical records remain, but traditionally the

³ *þet eadie meiden þe we munneð todei*

⁴ *Hercneð, alle þe earen and herunge habbeð, widewen wið þa iweddede, ant te meidnes nomeliche.*

origin of the legend and Margaret's martyrdom is dated to the early fourth century and to the great Antiochian persecutions under Diocletian and Maximian, between the years 305 and 313. Originally, the story is Oriental, and likely to have been transmitted to the western tradition via Greek Church, where the saint was called Marina. There is literary evidence in the western martyrologies and epitomes from the eighth century onwards, and the Latin texts make reference to Marina or Margareta/Margarita (Clayton and Magennis 1994:3, Spencer 1889:197). In the Anglo-Saxon tradition the two names are often confused and duplicated. In the OE Martyrology, for instance, there is an entry for both Marina and Margaret, clearly referring to the same saint but with different dates for the feast days (Clayton and Magennis 1994:76).

The Anglo-Saxon history of the cult seems to begin in the mid- or late ninth century. From this period a life of the saint, still called Marina, appears in the *Old English Martyrology* (ibid.:41). However, neither Ado (ninth century), Bede nor Ælfric (tenth century) include the saint in their martyrologies (Magennis 1996:27).

The cult of Margaret was quite popular in medieval England, and there is, in addition to the existence of the vernacular and Latin lives and mentions in martyrologies, ample evidence of liturgical celebration of the cult in calendars⁵, litanies, masses and relics. Although Margaret does not feature in the earliest AS calendar of St. Willibrord, from the late tenth century onwards St. Margaret features in almost all of the surviving Anglo-Saxon calendars (Clayton and Magennis 1994:72-75).

Margaret was commonly regarded as the patron saint of childbirth, although the Old and Early Middle English versions of the legend make no mention of this (ibid.:4). In the late eleventh century, there seems to have been a veneration of the cult of St. Margaret in England, possibly influenced by the importance of Margaret, queen of Scotland at the time, who was also canonised. As Margaret was also an important saint in the Norman church, the post-conquest veneration might have been affected also by that (ibid.:82-83).

There are various Latin versions of the life, and subsequent vernacular versions in various European languages. The cult continued to be popular also in England, and several Late Middle English versions survive. There are three extant Anglo-Saxon

⁵ There were two kinds of calendars in use; non-metrical, which were intended for liturgical use, and metrical which usually were for more private, devotional purposes. None of the metrical calendars mention Margaret, although almost all of the non-metrical ones do (Clayton and Magennis 1994:73).

versions of the legend of Margaret. Following the OE Martyrology, there is a non-extant Anglo-Saxon version from the eleventh century and there is a surviving version from mid-eleventh century (MS Cotton Tiberius A. iii) (Clayton and Magennis 1994:24, 41)⁶.

It is not clear from which Latin version the earliest vernacular lives of Margaret stem. Neither do all the vernacular versions belong to the same tradition, but the vernacular lives represent different variants of the legend's tradition (ibid.:17, 24, 56).

Distinguishing exactly the differences and similarities, which might be due to authorial intention, scribes and copyists or simply general affinity due to shared place and time of origin is nigh impossible (D'Ardenne 1961:xlili).

2.1.2 Life of St. Margaret in MS CCCC 303

The *vita* in MS CCCC 303 is part of a twelfth-century compilation of homiletic writings and saints' lives, possibly located in Rochester (Irvine 2000:48). On palaeographical grounds, the manuscript is dated to mid-twelfth century (Treharne 2000a:30). Although the compilation largely consists of copies of Old English texts, mainly Ælfric's writings, the life of Margaret is thought to be a late composition (Clayton and Magennis 1994:106; see also Proud 2000:126). Because the life in MS CCCC 303 is itself a copy of an earlier text, the precise date of composition cannot be determined with certainty, and it is not known how far it is removed from the original composition. Based on linguistic evidence, however, it is thought that the manuscript is not much later than the composition. The tonal and stylistic devices also point to a fairly date late of composition (Clayton and Magennis 1994:106, 70-71).

C303 does not derive from the earlier OE versions. It seems to be closer to the 'standard' Latin version (MS BHL 5303) than to other extant Latin or vernacular versions; the text might be also considered to be a free adaptation, and possibly there were several Latin sources (ibid.:61-66).

The compilation was probably not compiled with antiquarian interest, but rather for

⁶ London, British Library, Cotton Otho B.x. Of this version only the incipit and explicit survive (Clayton and Magennis 1994:41).

preaching purposes (Irvine 2000:47-48; Clayton and Magennis 1994:70). The language in C303 employs Latin rhetorical models and devices, adapting them to the vernacular prose (Magennis 1996:32-33).

The language of the text is predominantly late West Saxon (LWS). Although the text contains also non-West Saxon elements, on the whole it conforms to the standard variety of late West Saxon. There are some lexical items of Anglian origin, and Kentish, Anglian and Northumbrian phonological or morphological features. There is also some Anglo-Norman influence particularly in the spelling (such as *seagntes* 'saints' instead of *seintes*). Although on the basis of the Kentish elements, some scholars have deduced that the manuscript was written in Rochester, based on the mixed dialectal features alone, no certain geographical location can be assigned to the text (Clayton and Magennis 1994:103-106).

2.1.3 Life of St. Margaret MS. Bodley 34

In addition to the life of Margaret, the manuscript Bodley 34 (B) contains versions of the legends of Katherine and Juliana, and also *Hali Meiðhad* and *Sawles Warde*. The manuscript is dated to about 1210 and it is written in one hand throughout (D'Ardenne 1961:xv). The exact place of composition is debated, but the text is written in a standardised form of West Midlands dialect, probably in what is now considered to have been a literary centre. The language of MS. Bodley 34 together with *Ancrene Wisse* (A)⁷ is called 'AB-language' based on the linguistic similarities. Together the three saints' lives (Margaret, Juliana and Katherine) form the so-called Katherine-group.

The language is that of West Midlands. The texts in the AB-group form linguistically a unified whole which has a consistent phonology, grammar and a distinctive and regular spelling system. There is a strong Scandinavian and French element, and also Welsh and Flemish loanwords (Wada 2003:14). The language is based on a local standardised variety, and is thought to testify to a continuity of a vernacular tradition. The alliterative form of rhythmic prose in the AB-group seems to

⁷MS Corpus Christi College Cambridge 402

continue the native West Saxon alliterative tradition, and the texts might have been meant to be read aloud (D'Ardenne 1961:xxvii-xxviii). There is an extant Latin version of the life dating from approximately the same period (early thirteenth century), which, although not the direct source for this Life, is more closely connected with it than any other extant Latin version (D'Ardenne 1961:xvii,xxiv). None of the vernacular versions derive directly from this version, although they belong to a common legendary tradition (D'Ardenne 1961:xxiii). In another *vita* in the same manuscript (Life of St. Juliana in MS B34) the author states that the work is *of latin iturnd*.

2.2 Medical writing in medieval England

Scientific writing in the Middle Ages was largely conducted in Latin, although there was a continuing tradition from OE of vernacular scientific writing and most of Anglo-Saxon medical texts date from tenth to twelfth centuries. This was a period when no other vernacular medical writing was produced as Latin was used as the *lingua franca* in scientific writing (as elsewhere), which places the Anglo-Saxon body of medical literature in a rather unique position (Rubin 1974:44). The extant texts are translations and/or compilations from Latin medical treatises. Most discussions on medical and/or scientific writing concentrate on later periods; from Old and Middle English periods (from eighth century to fifteenth century over 350 medical manuscripts survive (Robbins 1970:393), although the period from 1050-1350 is sometimes said to be characterised by scarcity of vernacular scientific texts (Crespo 2004:125). The distinction between various branches of science was not as clear-cut as today, and many of the medical texts combine magic and astronomy as an integral part. The church and religion also played an important part within medieval science; the Christian context is always present in medieval texts. In addition, the classical (Greek and Latin) tradition influenced scientific writing, and some indigenous folk knowledge and folk medicine were also incorporated within this framework (Lindberg 1995:68,71).

The seven principal manuscripts surviving from the OE/EME period include *Peri Didaxeon*, which is characterised by Rubin as “an Anglo-Saxon translation of earlier

Classical medical treatises, particularly of the ninth-century Petroselinus text” (Rubin 1974:46).

Despite the claims that since most of the plants mentioned in *Peri Didaxeon* and in the other medical texts surviving from this period were possibly or certainly of Mediterranean origin, this need not mean they could not have been known and even grown and used in medieval England (Voigts 1979:251, 259) although all the treatments presented in the text can not have been very useful or beneficial (Rubin 1974:67, 69). Nevertheless, the text was probably intended to be used as a practical manual. Sometimes a distinction is made between a qualified ('graduate') doctor and *leech*, who would not have had a formal education but would have practiced the profession nevertheless. The manuscript material and authorities, however, would have been essentially the same for both groups (Robbins 1970:394).

The relative lack of vernacular medical manuscripts has been said to have prevented the formation of a specific scientific or medical register until late Middle English (Crespo 2004:126; Taavitsainen 1994, 2000, 2001, according to Crespo 2004:132). The possible differences in the grammatical usage between the medical text and the other texts in the data will be examined.

2.2.1 *Peri Didaxeon*

Peri Didaxeon, 'Concerning Schools of Medicine' (hereafter PD), a collection of medical recipes, is found in the MS British Library Harley 6258b. The text has been edited by Cockayne (1866) and by Löweneck (1893). The date of the manuscript is debated; most scholars place it between mid- and late twelfth century. Ker does not include the manuscript in his *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon*, stating that the manuscript must, on palaeographical grounds, date from c.1200 (Ker 1957:xix). Some scholars place it even later, between the late twelfth century and early thirteenth (Voigts 1979:251); de Vriend, on the other hand, argues that the manuscript dates from mid-twelfth century (de Vriend 1984:xxx). The botanical terminology is included in the Old English Dictionary; Middle English Dictionary classifies the text

Terminus ad quo is based on external evidence; the principal source of the text, Petrocellus' *Practica* was written c.1035.

The confusion in the linguistic forms characteristic to PD is also found in other early manuscripts; based on linguistic evidence the *terminus ad quem* may be inferred (Löweneck 1896: VIII). The language conforms to many of the standard features of LWS but there is much confusion in the forms (Löweneck 1896: VII). The question therefore, whether the language should be regarded as Old or Middle English, is problematic and there are varying views on the matter. It may be regarded as “residual OE”; “late WS copied by a scribe who, though able to understand and copy texts in the late WS dialect, is so strongly influenced by the linguistic changes of his period that his reflections of these changes are frequently found in the texts copied by him” (de Vriend 1984: lxxv). While the dating is largely dependent on the possible date of the manuscript and of the textual sources, there is no conclusive evidence of the date for the text (Bierbaumer 1976: XII)

The text only survives in a single manuscript; not much is known of the textual history, i.e. whether it was copied from a Latin original or originals directly; probably it was filtered through earlier OE copies (Laing 1993: 98). The other texts in the manuscript seem to be of earlier origin. The manuscript is written in the same hand throughout, but the linguistic evidence points towards PD being a later copy or composition, farther removed from LWS (de Vriend 1984: xxviii), while *Herbarium Apulei* is an OE translation of a classical herbal (Voigts 1979: 250)-

The Salernitan influence on PD is another point of debate. There is no one direct source; the oddities in the structure and language might be the influence of the English scribe/translator or due to various sources. There are some passages in the text, however, which have been shown to be direct translations from sources which can be pointed out (Petrocellus) (Löweneck 1896: VI). However, it is not certain whether the English PD is a direct translation from the Latin, or whether the scribe has inserted either his own inventions or texts/excerpts derived from other, second-hand sources; he might also have had a compilation of Petrocellus and other sources farther removed from the Latin original, from which he was copying (Löweneck 1896: VII). Talbot (1965) argues that the Salernitan material in the Anglo-Saxon texts goes back to ninth century and thus the Salernitan influence has no bearing on the Anglo-Saxon texts

(Talbot 1965:168).

PD begins with a short history of (classical) medicine, followed by the medical recipes. The recipes are generally fairly short, sometimes not containing more than two sentences. Examples [1] and [2] illustrate typical recipes in the text. The heading is often in Latin or both in Greek and in Latin, after which follows the English translation of the title and an explanation of the foreign words (*þ greccas hataþ* 'the Greeks call it'; *on leden perníciam man hyt hæet* 'on Latin it is called *perníciam*') [1]. Then follows the actual recipe. Most of the recipes are very short, although some take up more space; often there are also several recipes for the same ailment. Typical formula is exemplified here; *nim* 'take' .. *meng to gadere* 'mix together' .. *nim þanne* 'then take'.

[1] *Ad pormones . id est ad infirmitatem manuum.*
wið sare handa.

*þes læce cræft is god wið sare handum & þara fingra sare
þ greccas hataþ pormones & on leden perníciam man hyt
hæt. Nim hwitne stor & seolferun syndrun & swefel &
meng to gadere nim þanne ele & meng þar to wurm þanna
sa handa & smyra þar mid bewynd þanne þa handan mid
linnen clape. (PD 112:90b)*

'Ad perniones, or chillblains.

For sore hands. This leechcraft is good for sore hands and for sore of the fingers, which the Greeks call *περνία*, and in Latin *perniones* it is named. Take white frankincense and silver sinders, and brimstone, and mingle together, then take oil and mingle it therewith, then warm the hands and smear them therewith, then wrap up the hands in a linen cloth.'

[2] *Ad vlcera capitis.*

*To þan mann þ hys heafod æcþ odder wurmas an þan
heafedon rixiad Nim senep sæd & ræp sæd & meng eced
& cned hyt mid þam ecede þ hit si swa þicce swa doh &
smyre þ heafod foreweard mid & þis is anredes læce
cræft. (PD 88:85a)*

'For ulcers of the head.

For the man whose head acheth; or if worms rule in the head: take mustard seed and rape seed, and mingle *with them* vinegar, and knead it with the vinegar, that it may be as thick as dough, and smear the forehead therewith, and this is a special leechcraft'

Examples 1 and 2 also illustrate the translations made by Cockayne (1866). The already at the time rather antiquated style may at times be somewhat misleading for the reader; the translations have, however, been used as suggestive guidelines to the syntactic structures. The footnotes in the edition also seem to be somewhat inconsistent; while at times pointing out the possible errors or deviations from standard usage by the scribe in the notes, at times an emended form is inserted in the text and pointed out in a footnote.

The language is highly formulaic, and therefore somewhat repetitive; the same forms occur over and over again in the different recipes. There is, however, variation, as even the most “familiar”, most often repeated formulas might take on different forms. The Latin and Greek elements in the texts are set quite clearly apart from the actual body of the text and the deviations from the parallel Latin manuscripts are numerous and sometimes mistranslated into English (de Vriend 1984:xxix-xxx).

3. Analysis of the data

The previous sections have dealt with grammatical gender and its characteristic features in the Old and Middle English periods in general as well as the background of the data. Using the theoretical background provided by the previous chapters, this section seeks to analyse the language of the texts in detail with regard to the loss or survival of grammatical gender in the noun-phrase and outside of it. The nominal forms and the attributes will be discussed in connection with the case system all the while concentrating specifically on the aspect of gender and how it is realised and preserved in the forms and in the anaphora. In the next chapter (Chapter 4) the specific points and questions raised in the first chapters will be discussed, addressing them in relation to the data and the analysis provided by this chapter.

The Old English inflectional endings denoting case and grammatical gender distinctions had some degree of formal overlap already in OE. By the early thirteenth century, the noun system had been restructured and gender was no longer determinable from the form. As the distinctive case and gender markers had to some extent merged and many of the forms were ambiguous, it is necessary to briefly examine the case system and the forms the remaining inflections could take. After discussing the properties of the nouns themselves, I will turn to the context of the noun phrase and the anaphora. To what extent do the forms preserve traces of their original gender? Do the nouns which had different gender act differently in these texts? Are there tendencies towards *masculinisation*, *neuterisation* or *feminisation*? How do the mixed-gender and foreign loan-nouns behave? Are there differences between the texts in these respects, and if so, are the differences due to diachronical, dialectal or other factors? To what extent do the surviving inflectional endings denote gender and case respectively? Are there any patterns to the gender marking, or are the remaining traces to be considered simply relics from an already obsolete system?

The reasons for variation within the texts themselves and between the texts (diachronic and synchronic or dialectal variation; manuscript transmission; genre) and

the existence/survival of grammatical gender are to be considered. Not all cases should be attributed to the survival grammatical gender; rather, a close inspection of the texts and individual cases might reveal patterns and usages which can be attributed to other factors such as scribal practices or written traditions. These factors will be further addressed in Chapter 4.

3.1 Nominal forms

Tables 1-3 offer the absolute number of the nouns according to their OE gender. They are counted by types and tokens, offering a comparison between the texts. The most common gender was masculine, as can be evinced from the tables. The amount of loanwords is also considerably higher in PD and in B34 than in C303. Thus the degree of conservatism and conformation to LWS (Late West Saxon) standards can be expected to be higher in C303, and, by implication, the degree of innovation and foreign influence higher in B34 and PD.

Mixed refers to nouns of mixed or multiple genders; these will be discussed in section 4.1.1.2. *Unknown* refers to nouns (mostly, but not always, of foreign origin) which are either so late that there could be found no established grammatical gender pattern, or foreign loans which were treated as such, that is, which were not integrated in the language fully enough to be inflected according to the English patterns.

	masc.	fem.	neut.	mixed	unknown
types	78	46	60	10	1
tokens	269	157	131	25	2

Table 1. Distribution of nouns in Life of St. Margaret (MS Corpus Christi College 303)

	masc.	fem.	neut.	mixed	unknown
types	128	108	76	20	36
tokens	562	371	411	109	52

Table 2. Distribution of nouns in Peri Didaxeon (MS Harley 6258b)

	masc.	fem.	neut.	mixed	unknown
types	150	91	83	32	46
tokens	605	250	243	92	53

Table 3. Distribution of nouns in Life of St. Margaret (MS Bodley 34)

Of course, the numbers do not offer directly comparable results as such. They are intended to provide a basis for the discussion, which follows. An attempt has been made to do a detailed analysis and to not only compare the absolute/relative number of occurrences in isolation, but to link the discussion to the syntactic, semantic and discursive context. The various underlying variables possibly affecting the results and the wider context will be discussed in Chapter 4. The repetition rates are fairly high in all of the texts. As can be seen from the tables, the token count is considerably higher than the type count, and for instance masculine nouns are repeated on average four times in all of the texts.

In the following section, I shall examine the NP in detail, discussing the properties and features of the nouns themselves as well as those of their attributes. Analysing grammatical gender in the nominal forms is impossible without relating the discussion to the case system. The next section will address the question of case and gender, which were closely intertwined in OE.

3.1.1 Interaction between the case and the gender system

In OE, there were normally four cases: nominative, accusative, genitive and dative⁸. These were declined according to the gender, and further subcategorised into strong and weak declension. As the case and gender markings overlapped, the categories became even fuzzier following the phonological changes in LOE/EME (see section 4.1.1). Particularly in the weak category there was extensive overlap already in OE, and the

⁸ Sometimes also instrumental is included in the description of OE case system. As a separate case, however, it had largely disappeared by LOE and merged with dative.

gender of the noun was determinable from the nominal form only to a certain extent.

<i>lichome</i> (OE masc.)	C303	PD	B34
sg. nom.	lichome / lichame	(se/pe) lichama	licome
sg. acc.	lichamen / lichome		
sg. gen.			licomes
sg. dat.	lichamen	lichama	

Table 4. Paradigm of *lichama* 'body' (OE masc.)

<i>hand</i> (OE fem.)	C303	PD	B34
nominative	hand	hand	hond, hont
accusative	hande		honde
genitive			
dative	hand		
plural nominative	handa		
plural accusative	handan	(sa/pa) handa, pa(n) handan	honden
plural genitive			
plural dative	handen, handan	handa, handum, (pan) handan	

Table 5. Paradigm of *hand* 'hand' (OE fem.)

The preceding tables (Tables 4 and 5) present the paradigms of two nouns in the data, *lichama* 'body' (OE masc.) and *hand* (OE fem.). These examples have been chosen because they offer a point of comparison within the data, being found in all three texts, even though complete paradigms could not be constructed. In B34, which is the latest of the texts, the only possible endings are *-e* in nominative or accusative position (*licome*, *honde*); *-en* in plural (*honden*) [example 3 below]; and *-es* in genitive (*licomes*). In the other texts, the levelling to a uniform ending *-e* is not quite as evident. To give an idea of the variation in numerical terms, 31,8% of all noun forms in PD are endingless;

28,9% end in *-e*. The corresponding numbers for C303 are 27,2% and 34,6% (*-e*). For B34, the numbers are somewhat higher; altogether 42,5% of the nouns in the text are endingless, and 37,1% end in *-e*. These paradigms are intended to provide a starting point for the discussion by showing the extent of variation besides these numbers and the differences between the three different texts which are used as data for this analysis.

In OE, the preposition *wið* was used either with dative or with accusative; here there are examples of both use, demonstrated in example [1] by *handa* (OE strong fem. nom./acc./gen. form) and *handum* (OE pl.dat. form) in PD. Similarly, in [1], *to* appears with (*þan*) *handan* (pl.acc.) and with *handum* (pl.dat.) in the object position. The dative *-um* ending was subject to levelling at an early stage according to the chronology of the phonological levelling process established by Moore (1928). The final *-m* was frequently realised as *-n* already in Late Old English (Moore 1928:242), contributing to the diminishing distinction between the dative and accusative. The feminine gender shows not so explicitly in the form of the noun itself (particularly the weak noun endings overlapped considerably already in OE), but in the concord gender-specific markers are more clearly evident, for instance in the form of the demonstrative (dative *þære*) in C303 [4].

[3] *wyð sare handa* (PD 112:90b)/ *wið sare handum* (PD 112:90b) ‘against sore hands’

Wið þa handa þe þ fell of gað (PD 114:90b) ‘against (for) the hands from which the skin is peeling off’

Ad infirmitatem manuum . to handum. þis lace cræft sceal to þan handan (PD 114:91a) ‘for the hands. This leechcraft is intended for the hands’

[4] *þa halga fæmne genam be þære swiðre hand* (C303 268:207) ‘the holy woman took (it) by the right hand’

[5] *þe knihtes warpen honden on hire* (B34 46:28) ‘the knights lay their hands on her’

binden hire baþe þe fet ant te honden (B34 76:1) ‘bound her by the feet and the hands’

The form of the noun *lichama* in C303 is more consistent, staying the same in dative and in accusative (the weak accusative/dative *-an* is levelled to *-en*) but the forms of the

attributes show more variation. The accusative masculine demonstrative is *þone* and the second person singular possessive pronoun is *þinum* (dat.) or *þinne* (acc.). The form of the adjective *fæger* 'beautiful' has endings *-(er)an* and *-a* (whereas in OE the weak ending for both accusative and dative would have been *-an*; the strong endings would have been *-ne* and *-um* respectively) [6]. In PD, the nominative is preceded by the masculine definite article/demonstrative *se*; the dative demonstrative is *þan* (OE *þæm*) and the nominal ending is *-a* (instead of OE *-an*) [7]. In B34, the genitive form is *licomes* and accusative *licome* [8].

[6] *gemiltse þinum fægreran lichamen* (C303 264:66-67) 'have mercy on your beautiful body'
min swyrd sceal þinne þone fægran lichamen eall to styccan forcyrfan (C303 246:73) 'my sword will cut to pieces that beautiful body of yours'
we geseoð þe swa nacode sittan and þinne fægra lichamen to wundre macian (C303 246:89) 'we see you sitting so naked and your beautiful body (made) so wounded'

[7] *on þan manniscen lichama* (PD 82:84a:17) 'on the human body'
 & *eall se lichama 3eswæred byþ* (PD 120:92b) 'the whole body is oppressed'

[8] *þet licomes lust* (B34 46:35-48:1) 'that bodily lust'

All through the paradigms the confusion is evident not only in the gender-specific endings but also in the OE distinction of weak and strong nouns. In OE, the strong nouns had more distinct gender-specific markers, whereas the endings for weak nouns were more unified across gender paradigms. The numerical concord also shows signs of blurring with regard to the singular/plural distinction.

Single cases do not offer a complete picture of the variation both within the texts and between them, and presenting only single instances can be misleading. It is possible, however, through individual examples to illustrate the usage and patterns which appear in the structures.

In singular accusative, there is extensive variation in the final vowel of the nominal

inflections. Despite a tendency to a unifying final *-e* the OE vocalic endings are to some extent preserved in C303 and PD; but not in B34. For example, *gosu* 'goose' (OE fem.) in PD takes the ending *-e* (OE strong fem. gen.) in singular genitive, but on another instance there is variation with *-u* (OE strong fem. nom).⁹ In both cases, the phrase (*hwyttrre gosu/hwitere gosu*) modifies *smere* 'grease', the object of the verb *nim(an)* 'take' [9].

[9] *Nim ... hwyttrre gosu smere* (PD 122:93a)
Nim ... hwitere gose smere (PD 124:93b)
 'take ... grease of a white goose' (OE fem.)

The phonological levelling of inflections caused the nominal paradigms to fall together (see further discussion in 4.1.1); the (unstressed) final vowels were realised as *-e* in writing (probably representing a schwa sound) (Moore 1928:244-245). This weakened the distinction between the different cases as the morphological endings fell together. Similarly, OE strong masculine/neuter genitive ending *-es* was extended over the case and gender paradigms, and by the thirteenth century there was a tendency to extend it to all nouns, regardless of their OE gender (D'Ardenne 1977:209, Burrow & Turville-Petre 1996:21). In B34, *-es* is commonly used as the genitive ending also for feminine nouns [10, 11].

[10] *þe Hali Gast o culures iliche* (B34 76:7-8) 'the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove' (*culure*, OE fem.)

[11] *te worldes wealent* (B34 64:4) 'the ruler of the world' (*worulde*, OE fem.)

[12] *in ealra worulda woruld* (C303 266:143, 155; 270:261) 'world of all worlds'

In C303, the extension of the *-es* ending is not attested. *Worulde* 'world' follows a different inflectional pattern in C303. The noun appears in plural genitive and in nominative; the form in [12] is OE strong plural genitive *worulda*.

⁹ *Old English Dictionary* (available online at http://home.comcast.net/~modean52/oeme_dictionaries.htm) gives the following inflectional paradigm for *gos* 'goose': gen sing **gés**, **góse**; dat sing **gés**; nom/acc pl **gés**; gen pl **gósa**; dat pl **gósum**

In C303 there is only one instance with an originally feminine noun (*niht* 'night', OE fem.) with the ending *-es* [13]; in PD there are none. An instance, where 'day and night' are contrasted can be seen from the following examples. The proximity of the masculine noun with the ending *-es* and the connection between the two nouns: they might have influenced the form the noun takes. In PD, *dæg* (OE masc.) takes the ending *-es* but *niht* does not [14]. In other instances, the grammatical gender of *niht* is more clearly seen in the forms of the determiners than in the noun itself.

[13] *dæges and nihtes* (C303 264:72) 'days and nights'
(*dæg*, OE masc.; *niht* OE fem.)

[14] *þru dæges & þre niht* (PD 134:96a) 'for three days
and three nights'

In PD, all the original feminine nouns use *-(e)na / -en* (OE weak plural genitive *-ena*; singular *-an*) for genitive (in addition, some nouns use the strong or irregular endings). There are no instances of an etymologically feminine noun taking *-es* ending either in genitive or in plural in either PD [15] or C303 [16] (with the exception mentioned above). In C303 and PD, *-enV* (*-ena*, *-ene*) survives as the weak ending for all genders; in B34, *-ene* appears in variation with *-es* (*meidenes* or *meidene*) with nouns of all gender [17]. In the following example, *pinhnutu* 'pine-nut' (OE fem.) uses the weak plural genitive ending *-ena* rather than the strong one (*hnuta*)¹⁰ [15].

[15] *hetan pinhnutena* (*MS pinhutena*) *cyrnles* (PD 134:96a) 'heat up seeds of pine nut' (OE fem.)
Nim eft cicene mete (PD 122:93a) / *Nim ... cicena mete ane handfulle* (PD 122:93a) '(then) take (a handful of) chicken meat' (OE neut.)

[16] *eowre sawlen* (C303 262:20) 'your souls' (OE fem.)
þu eart ealre demena Deama (C303 266:122-3) 'you are the Judge of all judges' (OE masc.)

[17] *sorhe ant licomes sar is sawulene heale* (B34 52:34-35) 'through sorrow and bodily pain, souls are saved'

¹⁰ *gen* ~hnyte, ~hnute; *dat* ~hnyte; *n/a pl* ~hnyte; *gen pl* ~hnuta; *dat pl* ~hnutum (Old English dictionary, available online: http://home.comcast.net/~modean52/oeme_dictionaries.htm ; Quirk and Wrenn [1955] 1996:31)

(OE fem.)
englene leafdi (B34 68:7) 'lady of the angels' (OE masc.)

Genitive, besides indicating possession, the function it is most commonly associated with, had a variety of other functions. The extended usage of the ending *-es*, associated with OE strong masculine plural and singular genitive contexts, blurred somewhat the singular/plural distinction. Thus,

[18] *'Ic eom geara', cwæp hi, 'on Drihten to geleafanne þe gesceop heofonas and eorðan and he sæ bedraf þær þe heo wrohtað dæges and nihtes'* (C303 264:71-72) "'I am prepared", she said, "to trust on the Lord who created the heavens and earth and surrounded it by sea there and who made days and nights"'

the phrase discussed earlier, *dæges and nihtes*, could be interpreted either as nominative plural ('the days and the nights') or as genitive ('by day and night'; "adverbial genitive"; see Quirk and Wrenn [1955] 1966:63).

As another individual example, *scylling* 'shilling' (OE masc.) displays considerable variation [19]. In PD, it appears always in collocation with (3e)*wyht* 'weight' (OE fem.). Of altogether 16 instances, 10 use the ending *-a* (OE strong masculine plural genitive); three use *-es* and one *-as* (strong masculine plural nom/acc), *-e* (strong masculine singular dative) and *-ap* (probably a mistake) respectively. The verb in all cases is *nim* 'take', which is a common formula in the text:

[19] *nim plum sewes anes scyllin3es 3ewyht* (PD 114:91a)
'take a shillings weight of plum juice'
Eft nim bettonica anes scyllingas 3ewyht (MS *wewyht*)
(PD 128:94b) 'Then take a shillings weight of betony'
Nim eft bettonican preora scyllange 3ewyht (PD 134:96b)
'then take three shillings weight of betony'
litargio twenti3e scillinga 3ewyht (PD 84:84b) 'twenty
shillings weight of litharge'
niwes limes twenti3a scillinga 3ewihte (PD 84:84b) 'twenty
shillings weight of new lime(s)'

In the following example use of dative is illustrated in a sequence of connected clauses

[20]. The prepositions used are *(ut) of*, *þur* ‘through’, *inna(n)* ‘in(side)’ and *betweox* ‘between’. *Heafod* ‘head’ (OE neut.) appears in singular; the ending is *–e*. Likewise, this is the ending for *innop* ‘inside(s); intestines’ (OE masc.); the demonstrative is the masculine *þam*. The ending *–an* appears with *ceole* ‘throat, gullet’ (OE fem.) with the demonstratives *þare* or *þara*; *þa ædran* (*ædre* ‘vein(s)’, OE fem.) is in accusative plural. *Maga* ‘stomach’ (OE masc.) appears with the ending *–en* (*þan maʒen*). In plural, the ending varies from *–u* (*þyrel* ‘hole, aperture’, OE neut.; *þurlu*) to *–an* (*goma* ‘inside of mouth or throat, palate, jaws’¹¹; *breost* ‘breast’, OE masc./fem./neut.) and *–ne* (*lungen* ‘lungs’, OE fem., here *lunʒone*; *lendene*, OE neut., here *lendune*).

[20] *þ blod hym ut of þan heafode ut wylþ*
& on suma hwilum þ hyt ut sprinþ þur þwa litlan þurlu
þa innan þara ceolan beoþ
forþan þa ædran beoþ to brocone þa inna þa þurlu
beoþ & hwilun of þare ceolan þ blod ut wylþ
hwilum of ʒoman
hwilum of þan scearpan banum þe betweox þan breostan
byþ & hwylum of þare lunʒone
hwylum of þan maʒen
hwylum of þam innoþe
hwilum of þan lendune (PD 138:97b)
 'the blood wells out of his head & sometimes it springs
 through the two little holes which are in the gullet, for the
 veins which are in the holes are broken, and sometimes the
 blood wells out of the gullet, sometimes out of the tonsils,
 sometimes from the sharp bones which are between the
 breasts and sometimes out of the lungs, sometimes out of
 the stomach, sometimes from the inside, sometimes from
 the loins'

Further confusion could have been brought about by the fact that synonyms were sometimes assigned a different gender in OE. The proximity of a synonymous word with a different gender could have confused speakers to whom the categories and divisions already seemed fuzzy. For instance, in the next examples the two pairs of nouns have a different OE gender (*bodi*, OE neut., *licome* 'body', OE masc; *tide* 'time', OE fem., *time*, OE masc.).

¹¹ *Goma* (OE masc.) may be either the singular or plural form; these were not necessarily differentiated (http://home.comcast.net/~modean52/oeme_dictionaries.htm, s.v. *gōma*).

- [33] *te bodi* (B34 82:7) 'the body' (OE neut.)
þet licomes lust þet (B34 46:35-48:1) 'that bodily lust'
 (OE masc.)
licomes sar (B34 52:34) 'bodily sore'
- [34] *te tide ant te time* (B34 74:7) (*tide* OE fem.; *tima*
 OE masc.)

The synonyms could attract each other to the same category. Similarly, foreign superstratum influence could have affected the gender of a noun; the gender of a French loanword, for instance, could be assigned to the noun once it had entered the English language (see D'Ardenne :207; Welna 1980; Mustanoja 1960).

3.1.2 Foreign loanwords

The number of loanwords is considerably higher in B34 than in C303, where there are, in fact, only two loanwords which are not found in OE (*pic*, *ælmessan*, Lat.); the other nouns of foreign origin have been borrowed earlier during the OE period. The integrated French elements include mainly items of religious vocabulary, which are treated as native nouns; most of the loanwords are of Latin rather than French origin. Compared to the other two texts in the data, however, the total amount of borrowings is very slight. In B34 there are loanwords, in addition to Latin and French, from Scandinavian.

The loanwords which had been borrowed already in the OE period and which therefore were integrated to the language and had a gender assignment are included in tables 1-3 and treated like native words. Thus, for example, the Latin loanword *engel* 'angel' [Lat. *angelus*] a masculine in OE, was counted as a masculine noun. These are the words which will be discussed in this section. Welna (1980) points out that the majority of nouns borrowed from French and Latin were ascribed a masculine gender classification (Welna 1980:400).

Of the 36 Latin/Old French/Norman French loanwords in B34¹², nine (25%) have a gender assignment in OE (according to the OE Dictionary); of these, six (66,7%) are masculine (e.g. *drake* 'dragon', *martir* 'martyr'), only one feminine (*lake* 'lake; pit', OE *lacu*); and two multiple- gender nouns (*bend* 'bond, chain', OE masc./fem./neut.; *leo* 'lion(ess)', OE masc./fem.). Of the 19 loanwords from Old Norse, 11 (57,9%) are assigned a gender in OE. In addition, there is one Celtic loanword (*genow* 'mouth').

Because of the specialised nature of the text, there is a multitude of foreign lexical items in PD. The borrowings are treated in a variety of manners in the text. Firstly, the rubrics are always given first in Latin, then translated into English, often first in the title and then explained in several words (e.g. *Ad infirmitatem manuum . to handum. þis lace craft sceal to þan handan þe þ fell of pylwþ* 'for hands. This leechcraft is (meant) for hands from which the skin is peeling off'). In addition to the rubrics, there are several layers of Latin borrowings. One group is the integrated loans (such as *ele* 'oil' [OE masc./neut.] or *butere* 'butter' [OE fem.]) which are inflected similarly to native nouns. There is also special terminology which, however, is not glossed or explained and thus probably expected to be understood by the readers. This group consists mainly of names for plants and herbs, some of which are attested in OE, some of which are later borrowings usually from Latin, sometimes from French, e.g. *Nim betan ane hand fulle & lactucan ane hand fulle & colianthane ane hand fulle* 'Take one handful of beet & lettuce one handful & coriander one handful'. These nouns, when they occur in an inflected form, always use the weak declension. For instance, in example [19] above, the form of *bettonica* 'betony' (OE fem. *betonice* < Lat. *betonica*) appears in accusative position either as *bettonica* or *bettonican* (*nim bettonica(n)* 'take betony'). There is also another group of terms which are sometimes glossed or translated into English but which use the spelling (and inflections) in the original language. The Greek words appear more like glosses; they are always translated or explained, preceded by, for instance, *þ greccas hataþ .. þ ys in ure þeodum / þ we hæteð* 'the Greeks call .. which is in our language / which we call'. Occasionally a Greek word is explained both in Latin

¹² For the purposes of this study, separating these sources would not have been practical. In addition, nouns with uncertain origin (such as *tunne* 'tun, barrel', OE fem.) which were possibly borrowed, but which had been fully integrated in the language, have not been counted. On the certainty/uncertainty of borrowings and sources, the Middle English Compendium (available online at <http://ets.umd.umich.edu/m/med/>) and the Old English Dictionary, (available online at http://home.comcast.net/~modean52/oeme_dictionaries.htm; partly cross-referenced with the Bosworth and Toller dictionary, available online at <http://beowulf.engl.uky.edu/~kiernan/BT/Bosworth-Toller.htm>) have been consulted.

and in English (*Ad emoptoycos þ greccas hateð amatostax þ ys on ledene ure 3enemned reiectatio & on englise ys haten blod rine*¹³ 'Ad emoptoycos which the Greeks call amatostax which is in Latin called reiectatio and in English is called bleeding'). This also applies to, for instance, *litargio* 'litharge', borrowed to English from Old French, but ultimately deriving from Greek¹⁴ (see example [19]). Thus, only the first two groups of Latin borrowings are (sometimes) inflected in case and gender and therefore are relevant to the present discussion.

Of the altogether 53 Latin/French borrowed lexical items in the text, 31 have a gender assignment in OE; there are only five neuter nouns and three multiple-gender nouns; the rest (23) represent quite evenly masculine and feminine gender (11 and 12 nouns; 35,5% and 38,7% respectively). This is not in accordance with Weřna's claim that the majority of loan nouns is OE were assigned masculine gender classification. On the other hand, it could be easily explained by the nature of the words; a large part of the loan nouns in PD designate different kinds of plants and herbs. *Wyr̥t* 'herb, vegetable, plant, spice; crop; root' was feminine in OE, and therefore it would have been natural to assign a feminine gender to borrowed nouns which can be place under this cover term. Here a native noun is glossed with Latin (*dweorge dwostle*, OE fem. 'the herb pennyroyal, flea-bane'; *polle3ia*, Lat.). *Ecede* 'acid, vinegar' (OE masc./neut.) is also a borrowing from Latin (*acetum*). The pronoun used is *hi* (OE fem./general plural).

[21] *nim dwor3e dwostlan hoc est polle3ia & do hi on ecede* (PD 100:88a) 'take pennyroyal that is polle3ia & do it in vinegar'

The inflections are mainly in the weak declension, and often the nouns appear endless. (*eft nim ladsar þ teafur & galpanj oppres healfes þani3e whit & gnid hyt to gadere mid wlacan ecede* (PD 88:85b) 'Again, take laserpitium, the gum, and of galbanum the weight of a penny and a half, and rub it together with lukewarm vinegar'¹⁵).

¹³ *Leden* could mean either 'Latin' or 'language' in general. In this example, it is modified by *ure* 'our' which would commonly be translated as 'our language', and is, in fact, used in that meaning in this text (*þ ys on ure leodene hneccan (MS hnencca) sar* 'that is in our language neck sore').

¹⁴ MED, s.v. *litarge* (available online: <http://ets.umd.umich.edu/m/med/>).

¹⁵ Translated by Cockayne (1866:89).

3.1.3 Mixed/multiple-gender nouns

The different forms of mixed or multiple gender nouns (nouns which had two or three genders, where the endings sometimes varied according to for instance the natural sex properties of the real-world denotata). According to Mitchell (1986) the reason for these forms may be their possible lateness; i.e. these nouns would be the result of the system which was already becoming obsolete. They could also have been caused by analogical confusion in a particular context; or they could be residues from earlier confusion in the gender system of OE or Germanic (Mitchell 1986: §62-65). Two such native nouns are presented in Table 6. In addition, there are some borrowed nouns of multiple-gender; *ecede* 'vinegar' (Lat. *acetum*) and *ele* 'oil' (Lat.), both masculine/neuter in OE, occur frequently in PD.

	<i>breost</i> (OE m/f/n) (PD)	<i>þeowe/þeowa</i> (OE m/f) (C303)
sg. nom.		þeowe, -a
sg. acc.	(þa) breost, (þan) breosten, breoste	
sg. gen.	(þan) breostan	
sg. dat.	(þan) breostan, breostam, breoste; (þara) breosta	þeowum
pl. nom.		þeowes
pl. acc.		(þæt) þeowan, (þa) þeowas
pl. gen.	(þara) breosta	
pl. dat.	(þan) breostum, breosta, breoste	

Table 6. Paradigms of *breost* 'breast' (OE masc./fem./neut.) and *þeowa/-e* 'slave, servant' (OE masc./fem.)

Table 6 shows the paradigms of the nouns *breost* 'breast' (PD) and *þeowe/-a* 'slave; servant' (C303), both of which are of mixed gender in OE. *Breost* 'breast' is

masculine/feminine/neuter; *þeowa/-e* 'slave; servant' can be either masculine or feminine, according to the real-world referent. Thus, a female in OE would have been referred to as *þeowe*, a male, *þeowa*. In B34, *þeowe* is only used in the form *þe(o)we*, which was the originally feminine form [23, 25]. C303, however, displays confusion in the feminine and masculine distinction in form. In examples [22] and [24] the use within the text is contrasted. The masculine form is used both with masculine and feminine determiners and referents; the feminine referents consistently take the masculine form. The inflectional endings show similar variation in form; the plural form is *-es* or *-as* (OE strong masculine plural acc.) or *-an* (OE weak nom./acc. plural for all genders) [26]. There is also one instance of historically ungrammatical singular *-um* (OE dative plural) [27].

[22] *heo cwæð, 'ic eom þin þeowa clæna* (C303 262:30) 'she said, I am your pure servant'
heo þeowe is (B34 46:25) 'she is a slave'

[23] *freo wummon ich am and þah Godes þewe* (B34 48:24) 'I am a free woman and the God's servant'

[24] *se Godes þeowe Theothimus* (C303 262:10) 'the servant of God, Theothimus'
On þam lande wæs an Godes þeowa, se wæs Theothimus gehaten (C303 262:6) 'in that land there was a servant of God, who was called Theothimus'

[25] *an Godes þeowe, Theochimus* (B34 44:10) 'a servant of God, Theochimus'

[26] *ealle þa Godes þeowas þe þær on lande wæron* (C303 262:23-24) 'all the servants of God who were in that land'
Eall þæt Godes þeowan gefafodon (C303 262:27) 'all the servants of God consented (to that)'
Godes þeowes (C303 268:177) 'servants of God'

[27] *se gerefa cwæð to his þeowum Malcum* (C303 270:216) 'the reeve spoke to his slave Malcum'

Breost appears altogether 27 times in PD. The frequency of the noun offers for a comparison between the various forms. In singular nominative position, the noun

appears as *breost*, without any modifiers or determiners; in accusative position, the noun may appear with *þa* (*þa breost*); in dative position, it also appears with *þa*, although *þan* (OE masculine/neuter and general plural *þæm*) is the dominant determiner in both singular and plural. There is also one occurrence with the feminine dative *þara*; the inflectional ending is *-a* (instead of OE *-e* or *-an*); as this is also the form the noun once takes in plural genitive position (standard OE usage), the singular feminine might have been affected by that and possibly hypercorrected. The inflectional endings vary between *-a*, *-e*, *-an*, *-en*, *-am* and *-um*.

[28] *on þara breosta* (PD 82:84a) (sg.)
on þan breosten (PD 84:84a) (sg.)
to þan breostan (PD 110:90a; 122:93a; 142:98b;
 144:98b) (sg.)
on þan breostam (PD 120:92a) (sg.)
on þan breoste (PD 84:84a; 120:92b; 138:97a) (sg.)
betweox þan breostum (PD 124:93a) (pl.)
betweox þa breoste (PD 142:98b) (pl.)
betweox þa broesta (PD 142:98b) (pl.)

3.1.4 Resilient nouns

The so-called *resilient nouns* present a different case. These were nouns which were more likely to retain their grammatical gender later in the period when the grammatical gender markers had largely disappeared from the language as a whole. Representing a semantic category, these nouns are difficult to classify or define in a precise manner (Curzan 2003:29). This lexical subset is closely connected with *personification* (see further section 4.2.2.1), although it is not defined by it. Curzan (2003) observes that these nouns do not seem to be affected by distance between the antecedent noun and the anaphoric pronoun (Curzan 2003:100). These nouns include terrestrial entities such as *eorðe* ‘earth’ (OE fem.), *woruld* ‘world’ (OE fem.), *burg* ‘city’ (OE fem.); celestial bodies such as *sunne* ‘sun’ (OE fem.)¹⁶, *mona* ‘moon’ (OE masc.); temporal phenomena

¹⁶ Although ‘sun’ (*sunne*) is usually labelled feminine, there was also masculine form *sunna* (Old English Dictionary, http://home.comcast.net/~modean52/oeme_dictionaries.htm). In PD, the singular genitive form appears as *sunna* (*after sunna upgange* ‘after sunrise’); the feminine form in OE would have been

such as *dæg* ‘day’ (OE masc.); and *cirice* ‘church’ (Curzan 2003:100-101; Mustanoja 1966:48).

Eorðe ‘earth’ retains feminine grammatical features in all of the texts in the data. In nominative position, the demonstrative used is *seo* in C303 (*seo eorðe*); in dative it is used with *þæra* (C303), *para* (PD) or *þer* (B34) [29]; this is the only instance in which the feminine dative form of the demonstrative survives in B34. The noun is often found in collocation with *heofon* ‘heaven’ (OE masc.) [30]; the (accusative) ending of *heofon* is different in C303 and PD (*heofonas/heofenes*), but the form of *eorðe* is *eorðan* in both.. A similar noun is *woruld* ‘world’, which appears once in B34 with the demonstrative/article *teos* (which in singular is only used here [31] and with *bone* ‘prayer’, OE fem.), although in other instances the article *þe* (*þe world/þe worlde*) is used. Genitive form is *worldes* or *worldene* [32]. In C303, the genitive plural form is *worulda* [32].

[29] *wið þæra eorþan* 'against the earth' (C303 270:230)
oppaþ para eorþa 'upon the earth' (PD 140:98a)
to þer eorðe (B34 58:28; 62:36; 78:33; 82:7-8) 'to the earth' (OE fem.)

[30] *heofonas and eorðan* (C303 264:72) 'heaven and earth'
heofenes & eorðan (PD 84:84b)
þu þe gesceope heofona and eorða (C303 266:133)
 'you who created heaven and earth'
Drihten God ælmihtig, þu þe heofones gesceope
 (C303 270:222) 'Lord God almighty, you who created heavens'
And þa ure Drihten him self com of heofonum to eorþan
astigan (C303 270:232) 'And then our Lord himself
 descended from heaven to the earth' (*heofon* OE masc.;
eorðe OE fem.)

[31] *teos wake worlt* (B34 44:5) 'this frail world' (OE fem.)

[32] *aa in ealra worulda woruld* (C303 266:143, 155;

sunnan (weak) or *sunne* (strong), the masculine form *sunnan* or *sunnes*. If *sunna* is here analysed as nominative, it would be the regular masculine nominative form. Generally, however, the noun is characterised as a feminine noun; Curzan classifies it as a resilient noun (Curzan 2003 100-101) and Mustanoja remarks that it is often personified as a feminine (Mustanoja 1966:48).

The forms of the nominal endings, however, only provide a blurred picture and provide a limited amount of information about the state of grammatical gender in the texts. Because of the extensive overlap in OE inflections, grammatical gender is often more easily determinable from the forms of the modifiers - demonstratives, adjectives and, to some extent, numerals – and anaphora. Next I shall examine the demonstrative system and how grammatical gender is realised in the forms of the articles and demonstratives.

3.2 Demonstratives

Although in OE there were in theory different paradigms for the distal and proximal deictic poles, or simple and compound demonstratives (*se/seo/pæt* vs. *þes/þeos/þis*), the forms were in practice often interchangeable. Thus, *se* could sometimes be translated as ‘this’, and *þis* used in the function of a definite article (Lass 1992:113). PDE distinguishes between distal and proximal deictic poles as well as differentiating between *this/that* and the definite article *the*, which came into existence precisely during this period. While the function of the definite article specialised semantically, *that* came to function as a distal demonstrative without gender or case distinctions (Millar 2000:11).

The OE determiners were declined according to case, gender and number. In the course of LOE / EME these distinctions were largely lost, and by the twelfth century, most dialects made a distinction only between *se* and *þe*, that is, between animate and inanimate objects (Markus 1995:163).

Tables 7-10 present the systems of demonstrative pronouns. Table 7 offers the system of the southern dialects during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (Fisiak 1968:90). Tables 8, 9 and 10 show the demonstratives in the data. Tables 11-13 present the numerical distribution of grammatical gender agreement in the singular demonstratives. Each table represents one text. As can be seen from the tables, there is extensive overlap in the forms, and one form can be used to cover various functions. These functions and their meaning will be discussed below.

	<i>masculine</i>	<i>feminine</i>	<i>neuter</i>	<i>plural</i>
<i>nom.</i>	þe, þeos	þeo, þe	þæt, þis, þe	þa
<i>acc.</i>	þe, þen, þene, þenne. þone	þe, þa, þeo	þæt, þis	þa, þas
<i>gen.</i>	þes, þeos, þisses	þer(e), þisre, þisse	þes, þeos	þare
<i>dat.</i>	þon, þan, þen	þare, þer(e), þisre, þisse	þes, þeos	þan, þen

Table 7. Demonstrative pronouns in the southern texts, 12th - 13th c. (Fisiak 1968:90).

	<i>masc.</i>	<i>fem.</i>	<i>neut.</i>	<i>pl.</i>
<i>nom</i>	se; þa	seo	þæt ; þis	þa, þe ; þis
<i>acc</i>	þa ; þone, þan; þisne ; þas	þa ; þise	þæt, þa ; þis; þas	þa ; þæs; þæt
<i>gen</i>	þæs	þære, þæra ; þas, þise	þas	þæs; þara, þære ; þeoses
<i>dat</i>	þan, þone, þonum	þære, þæra	þan, þam	þan ; þisum

Table 8. Demonstrative pronouns in C303.

	<i>masc.</i>	<i>fem.</i>	<i>neut.</i>	<i>pl.</i>
<i>nom.</i>	se, seo, sa, þe, þeo, þa, þ; þes, þis	seo, se, þeo, þe, þa; þeos, þis	þæt, þe , þa; þis	þe, þa, sa, þis
<i>acc.</i>	þare, þane, þone, þan, þisne	þa; þas; þane, þan	þæt, þas; þan, þane	þa
<i>gen.</i>	þes, þysses, þas	þare, þara	þas	þæra; þære
<i>dat.</i>	þan, þane; þam þæm	þare, þara; þisse	þan	þan, þam, þæm þa

Table 9. Demonstrative pronouns in Peri Didaxeon.

	<i>masculine</i>	<i>feminine</i>	<i>neuter</i>	<i>plural</i>
<i>nom.</i>	þe, þet, þis	þe, þet	þe, þet, þis	þe, þa, þeo, þis
<i>acc.</i>	þen, þene, þenne	þeos, þis, þen	þen	þeos, þeose
<i>gen.</i>	þes	þisse	þes	þes
<i>dat.</i>		þer, þisse, þis		þeo, þeos, þen

Table 10. Demonstrative pronouns in *Bodley 34*.

Masculine		Feminine		Neuter	
Masc.	Non-Masc.	Fem.	Non-fem.	Neut.	Non-neut.
se 29	þa 2	seo 30	þas	þæt 8	þa 1
þan 9		þære 18		þis 2	þas 1
þone 7		þa 9		þan 1	
þas 2		þæra 5		þam 1	
þisne 1		þise 1			
þam 1					
þonum 1					

Table 12. Distribution of grammatical gender agreement in singular demonstratives (*C303*).

Masculine		Feminine		Neuter	
Masc.	Non-Masc.	Fem.	Non-fem.	Neut.	Non-neut.
þane 44	þe 25	þa 48	þe 6	þan 40	þa 9
þan 39	þa 6	þære 36	þan 3	þæt 22	þe 3
se 28	seo 1	þara 15	se 2	þis 2	þas 3
þes 10	þeo 1	seo 11	þane 2		þane 1
þisne 10	þis 1	þeo 3	þys 1		þone 1
þone 2	þæra 1	þeos 2	þas 1		
þas 2	þysse 1	þisse 1			
þysse 1	sa 1	þas 1			
þam 1					

Table 11. Distribution of grammatical gender agreement in singular demonstratives (*Peri Didaxeon*).

Masculine		Feminine		Neuter	
Masc.	Non-Masc.	Fem.	Non-fem.	Neut.	Non-neut.
þes 7	þe 88	þeos 7	þe 47	þet 26	þe 20
þene 2	þet 6	þisse 1	þis 2	þis 8	þes 1
þen 1	þis 1	þer 2	þet 2		

Table 13. Distribution of grammatical gender agreement in singular demonstratives (B34).

The numbers presented in tables 11-13 show that while, by and large, the grammatical gender agreement in NP constructions comply with the OE patterns (i.e. feminine demonstratives, for instance, only quite rarely appear with masculine or neuter antecedent nouns), there are exceptions to these rules in all of the texts. The absolute numbers for demonstratives in general are very low in C303, and almost all of the instances follow OE grammatical gender agreement. The general patterns behind the numbers, however, are examined and compared between the texts in the data. For instance, the prominence of *þe* can clearly be seen in B34 for all genders (Table 13), but the picture is quite different for the other texts (Tables 11 and 12).

The OE simple singular demonstrative/definite article forms *se* (masc.) and *seo* (fem.) are preserved in C303 and in PD, although not exclusively. In PD, there are 32 occurrences of *se* but only ten of *seo*; in C303 the corresponding numbers are 29 and 30 respectively. Thus the occurrences for C303 both relative (considering the length of the text) and absolute (in particular with regard to *seo*) numbers are higher. However, the numbers can be misleading, since looking at the occurrences it is clear that in C303 both mostly appear in what could be considered expected collocations. All of the examples of *se* occur with animate nouns (*se gerefa* 'the reeve' [17 occurrences]; *se deofol* 'the devil' [6 occurrences; but only one with *se God*]; *se þeowe/a* 'the slave/servant' [2; both with a masculine referent], *se cing* 'the king' [1 example]; *se draca* 'the dragon' [1 example]); all but one of *seo* in collocation with either *seo eadiga Margareta* 'the blessed Margaret' or *seo fæmne* 'the woman' (OE fem.). The one exception is *seo eorðe* 'the earth' (OE

fem.). Thus, in C303, all of the instances of *se(o)* agree grammatically with the antecedent noun.

In PD, there are more aberrations from the historical patterns. Masculine *se* appears with originally feminine nouns three times in PD; *se sealfe* 'salve' (OE fem.) occurs twice; the third is with a feminine plural noun: *se beanne* 'the beans'. Another deviation from the OE pattern is *se ansine* (OE fem./neut.). All other instances are with masculine nouns. Only seven of the examples featuring *se* are with animate nouns (*se læce* 'the leech'; *se man* 'the man', *se seocca* 'the sick (man)'). 'Seo (fem.) occurs once with an originally masculine noun; otherwise (11 times) it is found in nominative feminine contexts [36]. Example [35] shows variation in the choice of the demonstrative, which appears as either *þe* or *seo*, and may easily therefore be treated as a scribal mistake.

[35] *eall þe drenc* (PD 130:94b) 'all that drink'
þe spæu drenc ys god ær mete (PD 130:94b)
 'the spew drink is good before food'
þis ys seo selesta drenc (PD 136:96b) 'this is the best
 drink' (OE masc.)

[36] *(H)er onginþ seo boc peri didaxeon* (PD 82:84a)
 'Here begins the book Peri Didaxeon' (OE fem.)

Moore (1928:238) remarks that the *se(o)* variant was disappearing during the twelfth century in favour of *þe(o)*. While *þe* is emerging in PD as the definite article, and is already established as such in B34, C303 is more conservative in this respect. *þeo* is even more marginal in all of the texts; in PD there are only four instances of *þeo* as a determiner; three with feminine nouns (*þeo þrutu* 'the throat'; *þeo ylca adle* 'the same sickness'; *þeo blodlæse* 'the bloodletting') and one with a masculine (*þeo bræde* 'the roast meat'). There are no examples in either C303 or B34 where *þeo* figures only in the relative construction *þeo þe*.¹⁷

¹⁷*þeo (þe)* was used as a "generalising relative" (Kivimaa 1966:80) in constructions such as

*þisne læcedom mann sceal do þan mann þeo beo on heora heortan 3e
 sidu unhale* (PD 126:93b) 'this leechcraft is for the mann whose
 heart or sides are not well'
þeo þe wenden to fordon him (B34 48.31) 'those who thought to
 destroy him'

In C303, there is only one instance of *þe* as a definite article; all of the occurrences are strictly confined to relative use. The only use of the definite *þe* is with a plural masculine noun, and could also possibly be dismissed as a scribal mistake, as it appears in a list where the other items are preceded by *þa* [37]. In B34, *þe* is used with nouns of all gender; *þa* features three times in a plural context, otherwise the functions of both *þa* and *sV*-forms have been covered by *þe* [38].

[37] *þe cinges and þa ealdormenn and þa yfela gerefan*
(C303 262.22-23) 'the kings and the ealdormen
and the evil reeves'

[38] *te luue of þe luueliche Lauerd of heouene ant of þe
lufsume cwen, englene leafdi* (B34 68:6-7) 'the love of the
gracious Lord of heaven and of the beloved queen, the
lady of engels' (*luue* OE fem; *cwen* OE fem.)

þe in PD is used with nouns of all genders, although most of the occurrences are with an originally masculine noun; of altogether 35 instances of *þe* in the text, six are with a feminine noun [39] and only three with an original neuter; the rest are with original masculines; of these, only three occur with a plural noun. Altogether eight occurrences are with animate nouns (of these, five with *þe man*). The graph *þ*, however, features more frequently in the text (altogether 51 times) as a determiner [40].

[39] *þe feorðan 3escornesse* (PD 84:84b) 'the fourth
division' (OE fem.)

[40] *Wið (MS Wid) þ heafod þe byð toswollen þ greca*
ulcerosus hatað þ is heafod sar (PD 84:84b) 'For the head
which is swollen, which the Greeks call "ulcerosus", that
is, head sore'

In B34 there are two examples of the use of *þa* in plural; otherwise *þe* is used to cover all the functions (singular/plural without gender distinction) for which C303 still uses differing forms. In PD, there is variation in the usage between *þe* and *þa*, which could also be counted as mistakes or scribal errors, when in successive lines (when the title

and the first line of the recipe often repeat each other) a different article/determiner is used in exactly same sentence [41-43]. This confusion in the forms demonstrates the breakdown of the system and the amalgamation of the previously separate forms; the fact that in PD *þe* and *þa* seem to occasionally be practically interchangeable could mean that they were not distinguished in pronunciation any longer, and the form *þa* has completely disappeared from the slightly later text of B34. However, a majority of the 135 instances occur with feminine (35,5%; N=48) or plural (51,1%; N=69) contexts; only 6,7 (N=9) occur in a singular neuter and 4,5% (N=6) in a singular masculine context; in addition, 3 of the occurrences are with the multiple-gender noun *breost* 'breast' in singular context. Not all occurrences, however, are straightforwardly singular or plural, but the numerical concord is here somewhat blurred as well. The examples in [42] could be interpreted either way; the demonstrative used in either *þe* or *þa*. *Wæta* (OE masc.) can be translated in various ways ('wetness, moisture, humors, fluid, water; drink; sap; urine' [Old English Dictionary, s.v. *wæta*], thus either as plural or singular. The same variation between *þe* and *þa* can be seen in unambiguously plural [41] and singular [43] examples.

[41] *þ flæsc ðe abute þe tēþ wuxt* (PD 122:88b) 'the flesh
growing around the teeth'
þ flæsc ðe abute þa tēþ wuxt (PD 122:88b) (OE masc.)

[42] *þe yfela (MS hyfela) wæte* (PD 120:92b) 'the evil
humour(s)'
þa yfele wæta (PD 130:94b) (OE masc.)

[43] *þe þrydde adle* (PD 110:90a) 'the third sickness'
wið þa adle (PD 86:85a) 'with the sickness' (OE fem.)

Examples [41-45] illustrate the use of *þa* (OE plural nominative/accusative, weak feminine accusative). Although the usage in C303 mostly conforms to the OE contexts (of altogether 26 occurrences, 23 are in feminine accusative or plural nominative/accusative contexts) [44], it is also used in masculine and neuter contexts [45]. Thus, even though *þe* only shows up once in the text, *þa* can be used in the contexts with which *þe* became or had already become associated (Millar 2000:212). Although this usage is still marginal in the text, it conforms to the general tendency

exhibited by the later texts in the data.

[44] *And se deofol him þa abalhc and þa fæmne*
forswelgan wolde (C303 266:136) 'And the devil
became irritated and wanted to swallow the woman'
And þa Godes wiðerwinnan þa fæmnan genamon ut of
þære byrig (C303 270:217) 'And then the God's
enemies dragged the woman out of the town'
þe cinges and þa ealdormenn & þa yfela gerefan
(C303 262:22-23) 'the kings and the ealdormen
and the evil reeves'

[45] *þa halga seagntes ofercomen þa deofla þe wið heom*
gewunnon (C303 260:3) 'the holy saints overcame
the devils who fought against them'
þa yfelan geweorc (C303 264:104) 'the evil deed(s)'

While *þe* had already become the standard form of the definite article, *þet* still lingered on as a variant for the definite article as well as the most prevalent form of demonstrative pronoun. The originally neuter *þet*, which in earlier texts only used with singular inanimate nouns (Burrow & Turville-Petre 1996:28), is used for human animate nouns as well as originally feminine nouns in B34 [46, 47].

[46] *þe eadi meiden, Margarete bi nome* (B34 82:33) 'the
blessed maiden, whose name was Margaret' (*mægden*,
OE n.)
þet eadie meiden, Margarete bi nome (B34 44:20)
þurh þet eadie meiden (B34 44:27) 'through the blessed
maiden'

[47] *þe ladliche lake of þet suti sunne* (B34 66:26-27) 'the
loathsome pit of that filthy sin' (*lake*, OE fem.; *synn*, OE
fem.)

In PD, there are 22 instances of *þVt* (*þat/þæt*); all of the instances are confined to singular neuter nominative/accusative contexts [48, 49]. In C303, it only appears eleven times; the usage, however, surprisingly shows, in addition to the singular neuter contexts, three occurrences in masculine plural contexts [50].

[48] *þ ys seo gehealdenysse þære æ & þæt lifæt* (PD 82:84a) 'that is the observation of the law of the life' (OE neut.)

[49] *nim þanne þat wæter* (PD 104:89a) 'then take the water' (OE neut.)

[50] *eall þæt Godes þeowan* 'all those servants of God'
eall þæt men 'all those men' (OE masc.)

There are no instances of *þeos* (OE feminine nominative) in C303, although *þeoses* appears once with a plural masculine antecedent (*þeoses domes* 'of these judgments'). This appears to be a case of hypercorrection, where the masculine genitive ending *-es* is added superfluously to the demonstrative. The occurrences in B34 are all with feminine singular nouns; *bone* 'prayer' (OE fem.) [51] (six instances) and once with *worulde* (OE fem.) [52]; in PD, two of the examples appear with feminine singular nouns (*þeos þrowung* 'this suffering'; *þeos ædle* 'this disease'). The third is a plural 'these' with a numeral. In B34, *þeos* is also used with masculine and neuter plural contexts [53, 54].

[51] *efter þeos bone þa beah ha þe swire* (B34 80:34-35)
'after this prayer, she bowed her neck' (OE fem.)

[52] *teos wake worlt* (B34 44:5) 'this frail world' (OE fem.)

[53] *þeos weattres* (B34 76:8) 'these weathers' (OE neut.)

[54] *wenden of þeos weanen* (B34 44.6) 'departed from these pains' (OE masc.)

wið euchan of þeose word (B34 64:6-7) 'with each (of these) word(s)' (OE neut.)

The OE masculine and neuter forms of the compound demonstrative 'this' were *þis/þes* (masc.nom.) and *þis* (neut. nom./acc.). *þis* only appears twice in C303 (*þis mæ(g)den*, neut. nom./acc.); in addition, *þisum* (masc./neut./plural dative) appears three times [55], *þise* (fem.gen.) [56] and *þisne* (*þisne deofol*; masc.acc.) once each.

- [55] *þurh þisum hæpenum mannum* (C303 262:43-44) 'through these heathen people' (OE masc.)
betweenen þisum folce (C303 262:48) 'between these people' (OE neut.)
on þisum life (C303 268:189) 'in this life' (OE neut.)
- [56] *for Ic ne recce þise leasere þrowunge* (C303 266:109) 'I am not interested in this false suffering' (OE fem.)

In PD, *þis* appears five times, twice in singular neuter and once in singular masculine context; it also appears with a feminine noun (*þys adle* 'this sickness') and in a plural context [60]. *þes* appears ten times; all of them in collocation with either *læcecraft* or *læcedom*, both masculine nouns meaning 'leechcraft'. Both of the nouns also appear with *þisne* (singular masculine accusative; seven and three occurrences respectively), *læcecraft* also appearing once with *þysses* singular masculine genitive). *þisse* (singular feminine genitive/dative) appears once with a feminine noun [57]. *þæs/þas*, simple masculine/neuter genitive, appears in this context 14 times [58]. As a feminine compound singular accusative it appears once [59].

- [57] *wyrce þanne clyþan of þisse wyrta* (PD 134:96a) 'make a poultice of these worts' (OE fem.)
- [58] *þas yfelan bloddes fulle* (PD 142:98b) 'full of the ill blood' (OE neut.)
on þæs seocys mannes eare (PD 88:85b) 'on the ear of the sick man' (OE neut.)
fulle þæs woses (PD 132:95b) 'full of that sap' (OE neut.)
- [59] *on fruman do þas sealfe* (PD 92:86a) 'first make the salve' (OE fem.)

In B34, of the 15 instances of *þis* as a demonstrative, eight are with originally neuter nouns (6 of *þis meiden*); two with feminine nouns (accusative/dative; *of þis dede* [60], *of þis sunne* 'sin'); two with mixed feminine/neuter; one with masculine [61]. *þisse* also appears in B34 with a feminine noun [62].

[60] *do me merci ant milce of **þis dede*** (B34 82:10) 'have mercy on me for this deed' (OE fem.)

[61] *o **þis wald*** (B34 60:5-6) 'in the(se) woods' (OE masc.)

[62] *o **þisse wise*** (B34 66:12) 'in this way' (OE fem.)

The most distinctive forms in the demonstrative paradigms are the *-r-* forms, deriving from OE feminine dative *þære*, feminine genitive *þære* and genitive plural *þara*. Jones (1988) suggests that the usage of these forms was extended to masculine and neuter contexts during the 'transition period' from OE to ME and, along with the masculine *þæm*, used to mark locative case instead of functioning as a dative (Jones 1988:§2.13; see further discussion in 5.1.2). C303 exhibits the usage of these forms only in the contexts they were associated with in OE, feminine dative [63], feminine and plural genitive (with all genders) [64], [65]. There are no examples with singular masculine or neuter antecedent nouns. The forms *þære* and *þara* are used seemingly interchangeably; there are only 5 instances of *þVra* against 21 of *þVre*. Most of the examples can be interpreted to indicate a locative context, which was in fact one of the functions of OE dative.

[63] *fram Asia **þæra burh** to Antiochiam* (C303 262:35-36) 'from the town of Asia to Antiochia' (OE fem.)
*to Antiochia **þære byrig*** (C303 264:62) 'to the town of Antiochia'
*men of Antiochia **þære burh*** (C303 268:194) 'the men of the town of Antiochia'

[64] *Malcus... **þæra eadigra fæmne** þæt heafod of asloh* (C303 270:251) 'Malcus .. cut off the head of that blessed woman' (OE fem.)
*to **þære fæmnan*** (C303 262:38) 'to that woman'
*on þinre **þære sweteste lufa*** (C303 262:32) 'on that sweetest love of yours' (OE fem.)

[65] *ælc **þære manna** synne sy forgiocene þe mine þrowunge rædeð* (C303 270:225) 'forgive the sins of all those men who read (of) my suffering'
*ælcum **þære mannu*** 'to all these men' (C303 270:224)

Despite the confusion in the final vowel (*þVre/þVra*), which weakens the distinction between dative and genitive, the PD usage of the demonstrative conforms to that of OE. Although there is one example in masculine context (*þara læcecræfte* 'the leechcraft', OE masc.), and two with a multiple-gender noun (*breost* 'breast', OE masc./fem./neut.), all of the other instances (36 of *þVre*, 21 of *þVra*) are in plural genitive or feminine dative/genitive contexts. The following examples [66-68] illustrate the interchangeability of *þare* and *þara*. In [67], all of the examples of *tunge* 'tongue' appear with the preposition *under* in the same paragraph. The noun takes various forms in that position (*tuncgan*, *tunga*, *tunge*). In [68], the same sentence, 'if he has (enough) age' appears in two forms (*þare ylde/ þara hulde*). The verb form appears as *hafep* or *habban*.

[66] *of þare bladre* (PD 138:97a) 'of the bladder' (OE fem.)
on þara bladre (PD 84:84b)

[67] *under þare tuncgan* (PD 132:96a) 'under the tongue' (OE fem.)
se streng under þare tunga to swollen byð 'the string under the tongue is swollen' (PD 102:88a)
se streng under þare tunge to swollen byð (PD 102:88a)
& ceorf þane streng under þara tunga 'cut the string under the tongue' (PD 102:88a)

[68] *3ef he þare ylde hafep* (PD 118:91b) 'if he has the age (if he is old enough)' (OE fem.)
3if he þara hulde habban (PD 142:98b)

The only surviving form in B34 text is the feminine singular dative *þer* (OE *þære*). *þer* (OE fem. dat./acc. *þære*) survives in this text only in collocation with *eorðe* 'earth' (OE fem.) and is found twice in dative context. In nominative position *eorðe* is determined by *þe* [69].

[69] *te meiden duuelunge feol dun to þer eorðe* (B34 78:33) 'the maiden fell down to the ground' (OE fem.)
þet milde meiden ... hef him up ant duste him dunriht to þer eorðe (B34 62:35-36) 'the gentle maiden ... swung him up and threw him down again straight to the ground'
al þe eorðe (B34 76:14) 'all the earth'

wið þet ilke þe eorðe totweamde ant bitunde him 'with that,
the earth split open and swallowed him'

Thus the evidence from this material does not support Jones' suggestion of the spread of *-re* demonstrative morphology. Millar (2000) remarks that the usage of these forms was highly variable in texts of a similar provenance and date; for instance *Seinte Katerine* (which belongs to the same group of texts as the B34 text of *Seinte Margarete* used in this study) shows no *-re* forms at all (Millar 2000:235)¹⁸.

The corresponding dative masculine form was *þæm*. Jones (1988) postulates a new locative reinterpretation for the singular dative *þære/þæm* forms, where the *-re* forms would have been used in particularly locative contexts with disregard to gender, and *þæm* in “neutral (non-source goal)” contexts (Jones 1988: §2.13, see further discussion in 4.1.2). In other words, the case and gender distinction would have ceased to matter. The evidence is too limited to make any certain claims based on this material. There are only two instances of *þer* in the B34 text (*to þer eorðe*); both are used in locative expression, but there are no examples of *-m* demonstrative suffixes. In C303, 13 of the 18 instances of singular dative feminine usage can be interpreted to be locative in scope.

The levelling of the final endings is evident from the demonstrative paradigms as well. While MSS C303 and PD use forms such as *þisne* and *þonum*, they are clearly marginalised; *þisne* is used 10 times in PD (but only in collocation with two nouns discussed below), and only once in C303; *þonum* is likewise only used once. The dative *-m* forms are peripheralised in both of the texts; *þam* is used only once in C303 and three times in PD (of which only once in singular), whereas *þan* is used 21 and 156 times, respectively. In addition, PD has 47 occurrences of *þane*. *þan* in C303 is used in masculine accusative, masculine and neuter dative (with a preposition) and dative plural (with a preposition). Thus the accusative/dative merger is evident from the texts, but it still seems to preserve the gender distinction; there are no examples with an originally feminine noun in C303. The use of *þone* is likewise confined to singular masculine contexts [72].

In PD, *þan* in dative position (masculine/neuter/plural) is used with the prepositions *on*, *to*, *of*, *mid* 'with', *wið* 'with, against', *uppe*, *innan*, *in*, *fram*, *æfter* and *betweox*

¹⁸ Millar (1995) included *Seinte Katerine* and *Seinte Iulienne* from the Katherine-group texts in his data, but not *Seinte Margarete*.

'between' (128 occurrences or 82,5%). Without a preposition it is used 11 times (with two exceptions, in plural) and *þan* in accusative position occurs 13 times; in addition, it is used with an originally feminine noun three times (*on þan ædran*). *þane* is largely confined to masculine accusative contexts (OE *þone*) [70], although it appears once with a neuter noun and twice in a feminine context [71].

[70] *ceorf þane streng under þara tunga* 'cut the string under the tongue' (PD 102:88a) (OE masc.)

[71] *þane þriddan dæl* (PD 124:93b) 'the third part'
þan þriddan dæl (PD 132:95a) (OE masc.)

[72] *Ic þe hælsige þurh þinne God and þurh his Sunu and his þone Halgan Gast* (C303 268:187) 'I beseech you through your God and through his son and the Holy Spirit'

In B34, the form is *þen/ten*, deriving from the amalgamation of OE masc. sg. acc. *þone* and masc./neut. sg.dat. *þæm*. It is used in accusative and dative, cases which had almost completely merged by this stage. D'Ardenne remarks that it also occurs before prepositions and mostly before vowel; however, in this text only one of the instances is before a vowel, and none occur with a preposition. *þen(n)e* could possibly be regarded as a longer variant of *þen*. (D'Ardenne 1977:225). Apart from *unwiht* 'evil spirit; devil', which was of mixed gender in OE (fem./neut.) [73], all the other examples are with originally masculine nouns [74, 75].

[73] *þen unsehene unwiht* (B34 58:26) 'the unseen foe' (*unwiht*, OE fem./neut.)

[74] *hwa se hit eauer redeð oðer þene redere liðeliche lusteð* (B34 78:19-21) 'whoever reads it or willingly listens to the reader' (OE masc.)
he þe þene dunt 3ef (B34 82:9) 'he who has given the blow' (OE masc.)

[75] *þen sleheste deouel of helle* (B34 62:28) 'the most cunning devil in hell' (OE masc.)
steapre þen þe steoren ant ten 3imstanes (B34 58:13) 'brighter than stars or jewels' (OE masc.)

In the last example [75], the occurrence of *ten* might also be influenced by the proximity

of the comparative *þen. Steor* 'star' and *ʒimstan* 'jewel' were both masculine in OE.

3.3 Adjectives

The adjectives in OE were declined according to the case, gender and number, in definite and indefinite declensions. The 'weak' (indefinite) declension was used when the adjective was preceded by a demonstrative pronoun, a possessive adjective or a genitive noun or NP; the 'strong' (definite) declension, which resembled the strong noun / demonstrative pronoun declensions, was used otherwise. The distinction between strong and weak adjectives lasted until the fourteenth century although by this time the case and gender distinctions had largely disappeared. The adjectival case system dismantled much more rapidly than the nominal system, although it did survive to a limited extent in the southern texts (Baker 2003:8.7).

In LOE already the plural feminine / neuter *-e* became the dominant adjectival ending for all genders (Baker 2003:8.3), and it is the only normal ending for the adjectives in B34. The adjectives in B34 do not preserve any information of the grammatical gender. The presence or lack of *-e* does not signify gender concord, although it does carry other grammatical information and preserve the distinction between strong and weak adjectives, although even here the distinctions are far from clear. Thus, *-e* might or might not be added after a demonstrative such as *þet*, *þis* or *þe* [76] Plurals also add an *-e* [77].

[76] *þet eadie meiden, Margarete bi nome* (B34 44:20)
'that blessed maiden called Margaret'

þe eadi meiden Margarete (B34 82:33) 'the blessed
maiden Margaret'

þet eadi meiden (B34 60:23) 'that blessed maiden'

[77] *wið þe eadie beoden* (B34 62:25) 'with the blessed
prayers'

wið his eadie engles (B34 78:5-6) 'with his blessed angels'

C303 and PD preserve a fuller system of adjectival inflections. The basic patterns are presented in Table 11 below. The table has been divided according to weak and strong declensions and gender/case.

The distinction between strong and weak adjectives still remains (*hæþen* v. *se hæþene*; *eadig* v. *seo eadiga*) [78, 79], although there is some confusion in the forms. For instance in feminine and neuter singular accusative there are no examples of the weak ending *-an*; instead, both weak and strong forms use the strong accusative ending *-e* (*fægre fæmne* v. *þa fægre fæmne*; *niwe butera* v. *þara mycele hæte*). This corresponds to the general tendency in the inflectional endings the unstressed vowels to be levelled to *-e* and to eliminate the final nasals. There is also (unhistorical) variation of the final *-e* with a final *-a* (OE weak masculine nominative) [79], but otherwise the final vowels are largely levelled. There are syncopated forms (*micle*, *litlan*) alongside with non-syncopated (*micel*, *litel*).

[78] ***hæþen*** *cyningc* (C303 262:7) 'heathen king' (OE masc.)

se hæþene *cing* (C303 262:9) 'the/that heathen king'

[79] *his anwlita byþ* ***blac*** (PD 132:95b) 'his face is black' (OE masc.)

se blace *Ʒealle* (PD 84:84b) 'the black bile' (OE masc.)

se swerta *Ʒealle* (PD 82:84a) 'the black bile'

se ruwa *Ʒealla* (PD 82:84a) 'the rough bile'

	<u>C303</u> <u>strong</u>	<u>C303 weak</u>	<u>PD</u> <u>strong</u>	<u>PD</u> <u>weak</u>
sg. masc. nom.	<i>hæþen, unfæger</i>	<i>hæþene, fægra</i>	<i>god, blac, mycel</i>	<i>ruwa, swerta, blace</i>
sg. masc. acc.	<i>æelmihtigne</i>	<i>fægre, mycele, clæne, æelmihtigne, fægr(er)an</i>	<i>godne, blacne, niwne, micelne</i>	
sg. masc. gen.			<i>godes, niwes</i>	
sg. masc. dat.	<i>æelmihtige</i>		<i>mycele, leohtran</i>	<i>swertan, niwen</i>
sg. fem. nom.	<i>fægre, eadig</i>	<i>eadiga, clæna eadige</i>	<i>micel, micle</i>	
sg. fem. acc.	<i>fægre, eadige</i>	<i>fægre, clæna</i>	<i>niwe, swearte, clæne</i>	<i>mycele</i>
sg. fem. gen.		<i>eadigra</i>		
sg. fem. dat.	<i>swiðre</i>	<i>mycele, mycelen</i>	<i>godre, mycelre, miclum, hwyttre/hwitere</i>	
sg.neut.no m.	<i>fæger, mycel</i>	<i>clæne</i>	<i>micel</i>	
sg.neut.ac c.		<i>clæne, mycela, eadiga, hæþan</i>	<i>myc(e)le, clæne</i>	<i>niwe, micle</i>
sg.neut.ge n.				
sg.neut.da t		<i>eadigan, godcundum</i>	<i>wearmum</i>	
pl.nom.	<i>hungrie</i>		<i>micle</i>	
pl.acc.		<i>clæne</i>	<i>niwe, swearta</i>	
pl.gen.				
pl.dat.		<i>hæþenum</i>		<i>litlan</i>

Table 14. Adjectives in C303 and PD.

Various unhistorical congruencies are evident from the paradigms and from the examples despite the appearance of various distinctive forms. Particularly the dative forms, however, still have final nasals, and the feminine singular dative takes the ending *-re* (*swiðre hand*, *godre butere*); in PD, there are also two instances of unhistorical feminine dative *-um* (*of miclum hæte*) alongside with *-e* [81]. In plural, the dative may appear as *-um* (C303) or *-an* (PD). Although the patterns largely correspond to those of OE, there are discrepancies in the system. The falling together of masculine and neuter forms in the weak paradigm can be seen clearly, for instance; *-e* was the *neuter* weak adjectival form in nominative and accusative; the corresponding OE forms for masculine were *-a* and *-an*. The final *-e* appears with nouns of all genders, and the masculine *-an* is often levelled to *-en* in both of the texts discussed here [82].

[81] *of miclum wernesse* (PD 116:91a) 'of much weariness' (OE fem.)
mid micle nearnysse (PD 116:91b) 'with much narrowness' (OE fem.)

[82] *on anu niwe croccan* (PD 122:93a) 'in a new pot'
on an niwen crocen (PD 92:86b) (OE masc.)

[83] *of his topan leome ofstod eal swa of hwiten swurd* (C303 266:128) 'from his teeth a glare radiated as if from a glistening sword' (OE neut.)
to ure Sceppende Gode ælmihtigne (C303 262:18) 'to our almighty God creator'
Ic lufige God ælmihtigne (C303 264:62) 'I love the God almighty'
Drihten God ælmihtig (C303 266:131) 'Lord God almighty'
on Drihten God ælmihtige (C303 270:241) 'on Lord God almighty'

3.3.1 Possessive pronouns/adjectives

Some traces of the fuller system of possessive pronouns still survive in C303. Whereas in B34 the forms of singular first and second person pronouns are reduced to *mi(n)/pi(n)*, in C303 a fuller system is preserved. Because of the form of the texts, no

comparison can be done between all the three texts in the data because of the absence of second person pronouns in PD; the possessive forms in the texts are restricted to third person singular masculine (always referring to human males) and third person plural pronouns without a gender distinction. The dative forms in C303 preserve both the case and gender distinction in all genders [84]. The second person singular form in feminine is *þinra*/*þinre*, in masculine and in plural *þinum*. Masculine genitive has *-es* [85]; the nominative form is *min*, the accusative *mine*/*þinne* [86].

[84] *for þinra þære mycele ara and for þinum godcundum*
wuldre and for þinre þære mycelen mildheortnesse
 (C303 270:229) 'for your great honour and for your
 divine glories and for your great mercy' (*ara*,
mildheortness, OE fem.; *wuldor*, OE masc.)
Ic eow bidde þæt ge me on eowrum bedum gemunnen
 (C303 270:242) 'I pray you to remember me in your
 prayers'
for minre lufu (C303 270:212) 'for my love' (OE fem.)
and gemiltse þinum fægreran lichamen (C303 264:66-67)
 'have mercy on your beautiful body' (OE masc.)

[85] *ðu wyrcest þines fæðeres weorc* (C303 264:99) 'you
 perform your father's work'

[86] *þinne þone fægran lichamen* (C303 264:72) 'that
 beautiful body of yours' (OE masc.)
Ic habbe minne licchamen and mine sawla Gode bebodan
 (C303 264: 76-77) 'I have entrusted my body and my
 soul to God'
gemiltse me þæt min sawle ne seo awæmmod ... þæt
deofle mine sawle ne beswican' (C303 262:43-44)
 'have mercy on me so that my soul is not defiled ...
 (and) that the devil will not betray my soul'
Ic wat þæt min sawle is þæs þe clænre mid Gode 'I know
 that my soul is all the purer with God' (OE fem.)

3.4 Numerals

The OE ordinals (first, second, etc.) were declined like adjectives; the cardinal numbers had a more complicated and ambiguous declination system. The numbers 1-3 were regularly inflected, with forms for all three genders, although not necessarily in all

cases. Here the forms for these numbers will be examined in order to determine whether they preserve any features of grammatical gender. B34 uses the masculine nominative *an* or *ane* 'one; only; alone' [87]; *preo* 'three' and *twa* are neuter/feminine in form [88, 89]¹⁹, *brum* (*brumnesse*) is the undeclined dative form for all genders [88].

[87] *mi sawle .. nabbe Ich bute hire **ane*** (B34 54:18-19)
 'my soul... I have nothing but it (her)'
*an unwiht of helle on **ane** drakes liche* (B34 58:9-10) 'a
 creature from hell in the guise of a dragon'
ane wið oðer (B34 68:28) 'one with the other'

[88] ***prile** i **preo** hades ant **an** in **an** hehschipe* (B34 62:19
 -20) 'three in three persons and one in one glory'
*hare **preo** cunne uan* (B34 44:5) 'their three kinds of evils'
***brumnesse preouald** ant **anuald** þe-hweðere* (B34 62:21)
 'trinity threefold and one nevertheless'

[89] *his bodi tobearst omidhepes **otwa*** (B34 60:21-22)
 'his body burst into two'
*his **twa** honden* (B34 60:29) 'his two hands'
*tofeol efne **atwa*** (B34 62:1) 'torn all in two'

Here, the scarcity of numerals in C303 prevents extensive comparison between all the three texts. The forms which do appear in the text, however, show declinated forms. Whereas the form of 'two' in B34 is invariably *twa* (*his twa ehnen* 'his two eyes'), in C303 the dative form is *twam* (*mid minum eagne twam* 'with my two eyes', OE neut.) and *anum* for 'one' (*ða gewearð hit on anum dæge* 'then it happened one day'; OE masc.); the feminine accusative form is *twa* (*him þa twa land agæf* 'gave him the two lands', OE fem.).

¹⁹ In addition, B34 preserves traces of the dual declination: *ne mei **vnc** lifne deð noþer **twemen otwa***
*dem bituhen **unc twa*** (56:35)

	masc.	fem.	neut.
nom.		<i>an, ane</i>	
acc.	<i>anne, ane</i>	<i>anne, ane, an</i>	<i>an, anne, enne</i>
gen.	<i>anes, ehta</i>	<i>ana, anes</i>	<i>ane</i>
dat.	<i>anne, anu, an, ane</i>	<i>ana</i>	<i>ana</i>

	masc.	fem.	neut.
nom.			
acc.	<i>twa, twege, twegen, twegea</i>	<i>twy</i>	<i>twa</i>
gen.		<i>twegra</i>	<i>twa, twera</i>
dat.		<i>twan</i>	

	masc.	fem.	neut.
nom.	<i>þry, þru, þro, ðra, þre</i>	<i>þry, þre</i>	<i>þry</i>
acc.			
gen.	<i>þreora</i>	<i>þreora</i>	<i>þreora</i>
dat.			<i>þrim</i>

Table 15. Numerals in PD.

PD preserves a wider variety of forms both as indefinite articles and as numerals. The paradigms are shown above. *An* (used with all genders); *ane* (OE masc.dat.; used with all genders); *anne* (OE *æne*, masc.acc.; also used with all genders); *ana* (used in feminine genitive/dative and neuter dative); *anes* (used in masculine and neuter dative); *anu* (used once in masculine dative); *enne* (used once in neuter accusative). The forms, however, seem to carry little grammatical information as a variety of forms is often used in the same context. The paradigms have been formed of the three first cardinal numbers, and will be commented on separately. There is extensive variation in the forms, as can be seen from the following examples; different forms are used in the same contexts; for instance, in [93] there is variation between *an* and *anne*; similarly, in [94] the object for the verb *nim(an)* 'take' appears as either *ane æg*, *an æg* or *anne æ3ru* 'one egg'.

[90] *Nim þanne ane healfne sester wynes*²⁰ (PD 118:92a)

²⁰ Cockayne (1866) emends this to *anne*.

'then take half a [measure] of wine' (OE masc.)

[91] *do þane mann innan to ana huse* (PD 88:85a) 'get the man inside a house' (OE neut.)

[92] *anne cuppan fulle on ærne morȝe & oþerne an niht* (PD 92:86a) 'a cup full at early morning and another at night' (*cuppe*, *niht*, OE fem.)

mid ane clæþe ane niht (PD 94:86b) 'with a cloth one night' (*clæþ*, OE masc.; *niht*, OE fem.)

leȝe uppan þ eaȝan anne dæȝe & ana niht (PD 96:87a) 'lay upon the eyes for one day and one night' (*dæȝ*, OE masc.)

[93] *do eal þys innan anne niwne croccan* (PD 92:86a) 'put all this into a new pot' (OE masc.)

wyl on an niwen crocen (PD 92:86b) 'boil in a new bot'
seoð þanne eall togadera on anu niwe croccan (PD 122:93a) 'seethe everything together in a new pot'

[94] *nim ane æg* (PD 126:94a) 'take one egg' (OE neut.)

nim anne æȝru (PD 136:96b)

nim þanne an hrere bræd æȝ (PD 136:97a) 'then take a half done roasted egg'

wring þær of anes æȝes sculle fulle þæs woses & eles ane æȝes sculle fulle .. & wring þær of ane sculla fulle & tweȝra æȝer sculle fulle wynes (PD 132:95b) 'wring thereof one egg shell full of the juice and one egg shell full of oil .. and wring thereof one shell full and two egg shells full of wine' (*æg*, OE neut.; *sculle*, OE fem.)

Similarly, *twa* 'two' uses a wide variety of forms from the OE declension. Although the forms on surface seem to largely correspond with the OE patterns, there are a number of unhistorical congruences and variation. For instance in example [95] (in addition to the variation in the demonstrative *þe/þa* and the verb form *ys/syndan* 'is/are') the numeral appears as *twa* (OE neut./fem. nominative) and *tvera* (OE fem. accusative). *Cunn* 'kind' (OE *cynn*) is neuter; *healsgund* 'neck-tumor' is masculine. *Twa* (OE fem./neut.) is also used with masculine nouns, which here show more variation and fluctuation than the feminine and neuter ones. With *tide* 'hour' (OE fem.), the form of the numeral is *twan* [96]. *Dæl* 'part' (OE masc.) appears with *tweȝen/ tweȝea*, *æȝer sculle* 'egg shells' (*æg*, OE neut.; *sculle*, OE fem.) appears with the form *tweȝra* [96].

[95] *þe healsgund ys twera cunna* (PD 94:86b)
þa healsgund syndan twa cunna (PD 94:86b)
 'the neck-tumor is of two kind(s)' (*healsgund*, OE masc.;
cynn, OE neut.)

[96] *þanne byn twan tide do þa wylle aweȝ* (PD 110:90a)
 'then within two hours remove the wool' (OE fem.)

Nim þanne wateres tweȝen dales (MS daleles) (PD
 136:97a) 'take then two parts of water' (*wæter*, OE
 neut.; *dæl*, OE masc.)

Nim eft eallan wyrte wos swa wearm tweȝea dæles (PD
 132:95a) 'then take two parts of the warm juice of
 elderwort' (*wos*, OE neut.; *dæl*, OE masc.)

tweȝra æȝer sculle fulle wynes (PD 132:95b) 'two egg
 shells full of wine' (*æg*, OE neut.; *sculle*, OE fem.)

The ordinal 'third' appears in two different forms (masculine *se þridan dæl*; feminine *þe þrydde adle*). The variation in the final vowel is particularly marked in example [97]; the forms are *þry*, *ðra* or *þru* (with a masculine noun), *þre* (with feminine) or *þro* (with neuter).

[97] *syle hym þanne drincan þry dæges* (PD 118:92a) 'then
 give him this drink for three days'
leȝe þarto þru dæges & þre niht (PD 134:96a) 'lay (it) there
 for three days and three nights'
tweȝe sticca fulle oþþer þru (PD 128:94a) 'two or three
 spoonfuls'
þro piper corn (PD 128:94b) 'three pepper corns'
ðra monþas (PD 182:84a) 'for three months'

3.5 Anaphoric pronouns

Already in the OE period, human animate nouns were most likely to appear with natural gender anaphoric references. There is also evidence that neuter was becoming the default gender in LOE anaphoric pronouns (Curzan 2003:92). In B34, human animate

antecedent nouns are consistently referred to by their natural gender. *Meiden* (OE *mægden*, neut.) is always referred to with a feminine personal pronoun in both of the saints' lives. The comparison between the Margaret- texts and PD is slightly problematic, as PD contains no anaphoric references to animate females human animate references are restricted solely to males; the patient is referred to either with a generic or specific 'man'. This obviously has an effect on and restricts the comparison and discussion of the distinction and differences between animate and inanimate referents between the texts.

As elsewhere in the forms, the feminine forms of the personal pronouns are more distinctive than the masculine and neuter forms which tend to overlap. The ambiguous syntactic structures may affect the interpretation as well. The problem with counting exact statistics for anaphoric pronoun agreements is that the boundaries between on one hand the different forms (for instance, *hi/hio/hire* could in many dialects stand for singular feminine reference or for general plural reference) and on the other hand between exophoric (referring outside the text/discourse) and endophoric (referring to something within the text/discourse) references can be extremely vague (Curzan 2003:202). As can be seen from the following examples from C303 [98], the forms *hio/heo* and *hi* are used interchangeably to designate both third person singular feminine ('she, her') and third person plural ('they') in both nominative and accusative. The distinction, however, may be in most cases (although not always) easily inferred from the context or from the forms of the antecedent noun and the verb. In [99] the antecedent noun for the pronoun *heo* is syntactically ambiguous; the translation by Treharne (2000) does not make the structure much clearer, and *heo* could as well be interpreted as a mistake (by the scribe or by the editor) for the earlier *he* referring to *Drihten* 'Lord'.

[98] *þonne hio ungebletsodon wæren* (C303 268:172)
'when they were
unblessed'

*Hio hy sona seneda þa hio uteode and me þær forworhte
men of Antiochia þære burh gesamnoden þæt hi þa fæmne
geseon woldan And hi þa andswera ageaf* (C303 193-
196) 'She soon blessed herself as she was led out and the
sinful people of Antiochia gathered together so that they
could see the woman ... And she gave the answer'

[99] *'Ic eom geara,' cwæð hi, 'on **Drihten** to geleafanne þe gesceop heofonas and eorðan; and **he** sæ bedraf þær þe **heo** wrohtað dæges and nihtes* (C303 264:71-72) "I am ready," she said, "to believe in the Lord who made heaven and earth and surrounded it by sea there, who made day and night"²¹

In PD, the subject is often omitted and left for the reader to infer from the context. In these cases, translation by Cockayne has been referred to and used as a guideline. The distinction between singular and plural is particularly problematic, as many instances could be interpreted as either. This is especially true about the borrowed Latin terms which, if they take inflections, quite regularly use the weak declension. Some of the complications are illustrated in example [100]. The translation is by Cockayne (1866).

[100] *nim **myrta** & leʒe **hy** on huniʒe & nym þanne **ða myrta** & leʒe to **ðan eaʒean** þ **þa eaʒen** to ðinden & nim þanne **rudan** & cnuca **hy** & menʒ **axan** to & leʒe syðþan (MS syðþan) to **þan eaʒen** þanne ærest byt **heo** swyle **þa brewas** & after þan **heo hyt ʒlewlyce ʒehælð** (PD 98:87b) 'take **myrtle berries** and lay **them** in honey, and then take **the myrtle berries** and lay **them** to **the eyes**, that **the eyes** may swell; and then take **rue** and pound **it**, and mingle **ashes** therewith, and then lay **them** to **the eyes**, then first **it** biteth **them**; swill **the eyelids**; and after that **it** cleverly healeth **them**'*

Myrta 'myrtle'²² (Gr., via Lat.; not attested in OE according to Old English Dictionary²³) is treated as a plural ('myrtle berries'); the pronoun is *hy* ('it'). *Rudan* 'rue' (OE fem. < Lat.ruta) likewise takes the pronoun *hy* (which could be either singular feminine or plural). *Heo* refers to *þan eaʒen* 'the eyes'. The next part, *after þan heo hyt ʒlewlyce ʒehælð* is translated as 'after that **it** cleverly healeth **them**'. *Heo* could also be taken to refer to the mixture of rue and ashes applied to the eyes (and interpreted either as a

²¹ Translated by Treharne (2000:265).

²² Besides this sentence where *myrta* seems to be treated similarly to a native word (at least as far as it takes the demonstrative *ða*), the noun once appears in the Latin form *de oleo mirtino* 'the oil of myrtle'. 'Oil' appears elsewhere regularly as *ele* (OE masc./neut.) and is also inflected in a regular manner.

²³ Old English Dictionary, available online http://home.comcast.net/~modean52/oeme_dictionaries.htm

feminine singular or plural), and *hyt* 'it' to the beginning of the recipe; *þis sceal wið eaƷen tyddernyssa* (OE fem.) 'this is for tenderness of eyes' (Cockayne: 'this shall be for tendernesses for eyes', which agrees with the plural *heo*). *Hyt* is also frequently used as the formal (expletive) subject in all of the texts (similarly to PDE, e.g. *hyt pricaþ innan þa sculdru* 'there are prickings in the shoulders') or as a general reference, e.g. *hyt eall* 'all of it'.

Thus many of the forms can only be inferred from the context or by the verb form; while this is possible in many cases, it is often a matter of interpretation and any certain conclusions are almost impossible to come by. Particularly *hy/hi* is problematic as the form can stand both for plural nominative/accusative and singular feminine accusative and the nominal forms often look similar. The numerical concord therefore besides the gender concord shows signs of blurring. Similarly, *his* and *him* could stand for either masculine or neuter antecedent.

The animate nouns in C303 are in a majority of cases referred to with a naturally gendered pronoun rather than a grammatically gendered one. By and large, however, the grammatical and natural gender of these nouns coincide (e.g. *fæmne* 'woman', OE fem., is used consistently instead of for example *wif*, OE neut. or *wifmann*, OE masc.; this might be a conscious choice made by the scribe); the only possible clashes occur with *mæden* 'maiden' (OE neut.) and (*mæden*)*cild* '(female) child' (OE neut.). In a scene about Margaret's childhood in C303, which does not feature in the B34, *mædencild* (OE neut.) is referred to as *hi/him* until the child is baptised; after that the pronoun becomes *hi* 'she' even when the antecedent noun is *mæden* 'maiden' (OE neut.). This is the only occasion when the natural gender concord prevails over the grammatical one; however, Margaret is more often referred to as *seo fæmne* 'the woman', a feminine noun, in which case there is no clash between the grammatical and natural gender. After this, *mæden*, when used, is referred to with *hi*.

[103] *Hit gewearð swa þæt heo **bearn** gestreonedon and þæt wearð geboren **mædencild**; and se hæpene cing **his** fæder **hit** het ut aweorpan ... se Godes þeowe Theochimus gefand **þæt cild** and he **hit** up anam .. he **him** nama gesette and þæt wæs Margareta. And **hi** syððan to lare befæste* (C303 262:8-12) 'It happened that she bore a child who was born a girl; and the heathen king (who was) (the child's) father let throw (the child) out ... God's servant

Theochimus found the child and took it (her) up ... he gave it (her) a name and that was Margaret. And from then on, she was to be educated'.

The majority of anaphoric references in C303 are to animate antecedents. These, too, are limited in scope; the feminine pronouns refer to *Margaret*, (*seo*) *fæmne* '(the) woman', *mæden* 'maiden', *fostermoder* 'foster-mother' and *cwen* 'queen'. The masculine pronouns refer to antecedent nouns such as (*se*) *gerefa* '(the) reeve', *God*, *Crist*, *deofol* 'devil', *broþor* 'brother'. *Engel* (OE masc. < Lat. *angelus*, masc.) is referred to with the masculine pronoun; in B34 the noun only appears in plural nominative and genitive (*engles*, *englene*); the pronoun is *ha*. The neuter references to animate nouns are confined to the example [103] discussed above.

In PD, the grammatical gender concord in anaphora for feminine nouns is 63,6%, for masculine nouns 73,3% and for neuter nouns 93,3%. Even with the error margin, these numbers are fairly high. In particular, the neuter nouns only rarely take masculine or feminine pronouns, while both masculine and feminine nouns are more likely to take neuter pronouns (*hit/hyt*) than conflicting masculine/feminine references.

While anaphoric pronouns were likely to agree with the natural gender of particularly human animate nouns in OE, the gender system was to some extent preserved longer in the anaphoric references than in the nominal forms or the forms of the modifiers, and the agreement can still be seen in some conservative texts from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (such as *Ayenbite of Inwyrt*) (Curzan 2003:124, 126). In the data, while C303 has hardly any anaphoric references to inanimate objects, the animate beings largely take natural gender, also in the few cases where it conflicts with the grammatical gender of the noun, PD has a high degree of grammatical congruence for all genders. There are, however, unhistorical congruencies as well and even the same nouns may take conflicting grammatical references. For instance, *adle* 'sickness' (OE fem.) is referred to as *hyt* 'it'; otherwise the noun regularly takes feminine grammatical inflections and modifiers (*þeos ædle* .. *hyt*; of *yfelre adle*, *þeo ylca adle*). Similarly, *wæta* 'fluid, sap' (OE masc.; also *wæte*, OE fem.) is referred to with the neuter pronoun (*se wyrsta wæte* / *þe yfela wæte* ... *hyt*).

Feminine anaphoric reference to *tunge* 'tongue' (OE fem.) in B34 can be considered

to be a genuine reflection of grammatical gender [101]. Otherwise gendered pronouns are mostly used for animate (often human) nouns, which can be identified as either of female or male sex (*heo/hio/hire* for *moder* 'mother'; *he/his* for *deofol* 'devil' etc.). Inanimate nouns are in most cases referred to as *hit* 'it', with some notable exceptions.

[101] *ant lahte ut his **tunge**, se long þet he swong **hire**
abuten his swire* (B34 58:16-17) 'and (he) thrust out his
tongue, so long that he could swing it (her) around his
neck' (OE fem.)

Some other references represent *personification* rather than survival of grammatical gender. *Sawle* 'soul' (OE fem.) is referred to as *hire* on two occasions in B34; the definite article used is *þe* [102]. Likewise, however, feminine pronoun is used for *sawle* in C303 (*þa sawla .. heo*) [103]; this is, in fact, one of the few instances in C303 where an inanimate antecedent noun is referred back to with a personal pronoun. Because *sawle* in OE is feminine, drawing the distinction between grammatical usage and personification, which is rather a literary device, can be problematic. Often the intended gender of the noun is shown by the form of the anaphoric pronoun. Other examples concerning personification will be discussed below in section 4.2.3.1.

[102] *mi **sawle** .. heouen **hire** into heouene* (B34 54:7-8)
'my soul ... raise it (her) to heaven' (OE fem.)
*mi **sawle** .. nabbe Ich bute **hire** ane* (B34 54:18-19) 'my
soul... I have nothing but it (her)'
*þe engles, as ha beren **þe sawle** in hare bearmes* (B34
82:18) 'the angels, carrying the soul in their arms'

[103] *ures Drihtnes ænglæs þider comen and **þa sawla**
underfengon, and **heo** on heofone rice gebrohton* (C303
270:259-260) 'the angels of our Lord came there to receive
the soul and brought it to the kingdom of heaven'

Se(o) and *þe* can also be used anaphorically. *Se*, for instance, is in C303 used as a relative pronoun to refer to masculine nouns denoting human males [104]. As a general reference, *hit* is used [105]; the gender of the noun is irrelevant, and the anaphoric reference is used similarly to PDE.

[104] *Theodosius dohtor se gehersumode þan deofle*
(C303 262:21) 'daughter of Theodosius, who worshipped
the devil'

[105] *for min Drihten hit wat þæt Ic hit unwillende do þæt*
Ic æfre þas dæda gefremme (C303 270:249) 'for my Lord
knows it that I do that (more) unwillingly (than) any of the
deeds I have performed'

3.6 Restructuring the system: emerging patterns

The data show a variety of usages. The most conservative of the texts is the Life of St. Margaret in C303, dating from early or mid-twelfth century (see Chapter 3) which, by and large, conforms to the standard LOE usages, showing nearly complete grammatical gender agreement in anaphoric pronouns. The nominal inflections and demonstratives show more confusion regarding grammatical gender. The language, however, is likely to be deliberately archaic. Peri Didaxeon, a medical text dated to mid-/late twelfth century (and thus, possibly only a few decades later than C303) shows considerably more varied usage. It is nevertheless quite conservative with regard to anaphora, particularly for a scientific text, although variation in the nominal forms as well as the forms of the modifiers is substantial. The Life of St. Margaret in MS Bodley 34, dating from the mid-thirteenth century, is, not unexpectedly, the least conservative of the texts.

The nominal inflectional endings have been reduced in the data to a varying extent. Although C303 and PD preserve some inflectional endings from the OE paradigms, the distinctions between them have become blurred, and often the morphological endings are merged and levelled to *-e(C)* (e.g. plural dative *-um*, weak accusative/genitive dative *-an*, weak genitive plural *-ena* > *-en*; *-as* > *-es*) and these levelled endings were by analogy extended to contexts other than associated with in OE. For example, the OE strong (a-stem) masculine nominative plural *-as* (> *-es*) ending is used also with neuter and feminine nouns (*nihtes*, OE fem. [C303, PD], *te meidnes*, OE neut. [B34]). The genitival *-es* is still in PD is employed almost solely by etymologically masculine and neuter nouns. Although *-en(e)* is still used as a plural and genitive marker in B34, *-es*

is more commonly used (*meidene mede* / *meidenes mede*). The remodelling of the system according to the strong masculine nouns has been commented on by various scholars (see Lass 1992:108, D'Ardenne 1977: 207). The new system would have been used to mark semantic rather than syntactic relationships, therefore rendering obsolete the old case and gender distinctions and leading eventually to the PDE situation where nominal endings distinguish only between plural/singular and genitive/non-genitive. The new forms are gender indistinctive, that is, they do not differentiate between nouns of different gender. Yet there are only few 'wrong' gender agreements. This is also supported by other studies (e.g. Curzan 2003, Pysz 2005).

By the thirteenth century the levelling has been largely completed, and the grammatical gender is no longer determinable from the form of the noun. The only remaining endings are *-e*, *-es* and *-en(e)*. There are various explanations and theories concerning the case system at this period; and a division is made between so-called 'locative' and 'absolutive' cases (Jones 1988); or nominative and oblique cases (e.g. Markus 1995:163); or 'prepositional' case (e.g. Hoffmann 1909:92-3, Pervaz 1958:93, according to Millar 2000:33). D'Ardenne distinguishes three cases in the so-called AB-language (see Chapter 3 above) (D'Ardenne 1977:205).

Because of the overlapping functions of the nominal and adjectival inflectional endings, it is difficult to give any definite numbers mapping out the grammatical gender concord. The adjectival inflections are preserved to some extent in all of the texts. The inflections have in B34 ceased to differentiate between genders, but the difference between weak and strong adjectives is preserved to some extent. C303 and PD preserve fuller paradigms of adjectival declensions. Although levelling in the final syllables can be evinced from the paradigms, the adjectives preserve the gender distinction to a larger extent than the nominal endings. The numerals preserve various forms in PD, although the usage of the OE gendered forms is not altogether consistent. The distinctions between the different genders in the numerals from one to three are, however, retained particularly in PD.

One of the most striking points in the demonstrative paradigms is the emergence of *þe* in all genders, singular and plural. The form appears in PD and in B34, but only once in C303. *þe* is not an integral part of the OE demonstrative system; although there was a relative particle *þe* in OE, this is an unlikely source for the definite article *þe* (Lass

1992:114). This new form appears in the texts as early as tenth century, alongside with *se* in singular masculine nominative position; the final continuation of Peterborough Chronicle (1132-55) only makes the distinction between singular *þe* and plural *þa*, both used for nouns of all genders (Clark 1957:113; Lass 1992:112). In PD, both of the forms are used varyingly for singular and plural. While *þa* appears in B34, its plural functions alongside with the singular uses have largely been taken over by *þe*. The phonological similarities between the forms would have facilitated their falling together, particularly taking into consideration the existing ambiguity in the system and the connection between and similarity of functions between nominative and accusative (Millar 2000:208).

Comparing the numbers for the demonstratives, it is obvious that the low frequencies of almost any demonstratives (and the brevity of the text itself) in C303 affect the analysis, and even the most frequently occurring ones are generally in certain collocations, only rarely appear outside of them (e.g. *seo/þa fæmne*). In PD, the relatively high frequencies generally offer scope for a more extensive analysis.

As the relation to natural sex was not as immediate in the demonstratives as in the personal pronouns, the confusion in and the falling together of different forms could be more easily explainable (Millar 2000:36). All of the texts nevertheless preserve some distinct forms of the older paradigm; in particular, C303 is very conservative, adhering largely to standard OE usage. There is some fluctuation in the forms, however. The numbers of relative frequencies and gender congruencies in the demonstrative declensions show that despite the variation in PD, the majority of the forms correspond to the OE standards as well. *Se* and *seo* are suggested to have merged by twelfth century, leaving only *se/þe* (animate) and *þæt* (inanimate) as the distinct forms of the simple demonstrative or definite article (Markus 1995:163). Millar (2000) suggests a temporary semantic specialisation for the *se/seo* forms (Millar 2000:214). While this seems to be the case for C303, where the majority of the forms appear with animate nouns or in expected collocations (e.g. *seo eadiga fæmne*, *seo eorðe*), patterns of this kind are more difficult to distinguish in PD where, apart from a few exceptions, the forms only occur in contexts they were traditionally associated with. Similarly, the other feminine forms (*þeos/teos*, *þer*) survive in B34 only in certain collocations (*teos worlt*, *to þer eorðe*). Thus the thematic prominence of certain groups of nouns (human

animate nouns or those feminine nouns sometimes classified as resilient nouns, see 3.1.4 above) could be seen as the motivation for preserving these forms.

The marginalisation of demonstrative *-rV* forms (evident when compared the numbers in B34 to those of C303 and PD; only two instances against 26 and 57 respectively) can be seen in the material. In C303 and PD, however, the *-rV* forms appear not only in the contexts they were associated with (feminine genitive/dative and plural genitive for all genders), but also in masculine dative contexts. Similarly, *-re-* appears in adjectival inflections (compare dative *þinum fægreran lichamen* and accusative *þinne þone fægran lichamen* in C303). This phenomenon is also supported by other studies (e.g. Roberts 1970, according to Curzan 2003:44). Millar (2000) suggests the reason for the later marginalisation is *formal dislocation*; the distinctiveness of *-rV* forms contrasted to the newly emerging generalised *þe* (and associated forms) and set them apart from the rest of the paradigm, to the periphery (Millar 2000:238).

Resilient nouns were discussed in 3.1.4 above; these nouns seem to have been less inclined to conform to the ongoing changes in the language, preserving distinctions which were (being) lost elsewhere. On the other hand, some nouns seem to have been more prone to change. For instance, despite its commonness in the text (22 instances), *sealfe* 'salve' (OE fem.) in PD shows a variety of forms in the morphological inflections and anaphoric references, but particularly in the forms of its demonstratives. In nominative position, the noun is preceded by *se* (masc.; twice *se sealfe*); accusative uses *þa* (14 occurrences) with the nominal ending either in *-e*, *-en* or *-an* (*þa sealfe*, *þa sealfen*, *þa sealfan*). There is one instance with the masculine accusative *þas* (*þas sealfe*). In dative position, the demonstrative is the feminine *þare* (*þare sealfe*, 5 occurrences). It can be seen that although the demonstratives are varyingly feminine and masculine, they are used quite consistently to mark case.

Likewise, *drenc* 'drink' (OE masc.) takes various conflicting demonstratives; with one exception (nominative plural *drencas*), the noun takes no inflectional endings. The nominative demonstrative/article can be *se*, *seo* or *þe*, illustrating the interchangeability of these forms (*se drenc*, *seo selesta drenc*, *þe spæu drenc*); accusative uses *þane* (*þur þane drenc*, *þane spæu drenc*).

The forms of these nouns and their modifiers show considerable variation, behaving

indeed like the multiple gender nouns discussed above. Both of these examples are from PD. They could be taken as confirming evidence that the system was, by this stage, faltering, despite the overall conservativeness of the language in the text. PD shows the most varied usage with regard to demonstratives. While C303 largely conforms to OE usage with only very rare exceptions and B34 shows a much more limited range of demonstratives with the fairly uniform *þe* without gender and number distinction, the PD system has considerable variety. Although most of the examples are in line with the OE usage, the exceptions, too, are numerous.

It has been suggested that the pronominal system (in particular, anaphora and deixis) could have been enough to support the system of grammatical gender even when the gender-specific morphology had ceased to mark the differences (Classen 1919, according to Curzan 2003:44). On the other hand, it has been shown that animate antecedent nouns were likely to agree with the 'natural' rather than the grammatical gender already in OE (Curzan 2003:92), and that the personal pronouns cannot uphold the system on their own, without support in the noun phrase (Howe 1996:63). PDE still preserves the distinction between feminine *she*, masculine *he* and *it*, although the distinction is largely between animacy and inanimacy; *she/he* is reserved to animate (particularly human) referents, while *it* is mainly used for inanimate objects. Yet grammatical gender is not, essentially, part of English grammar today.

Although none of the texts fully preserve the OE grammatical gender system, even B34, the latest text, does contain traces of the OE system. Nevertheless the “abnormal” forms, the exceptions to the rules, tell more about the contemporary language situation than does the conforming to the standard usages. Thus, when the picture is put together from these different texts – which are possibly no more than a century apart, yet present quite a different outlook on the state of grammatical gender at this period – the “real” situation probably lies somewhere in between.

What caused all these changes in the language? The next chapter will examine the various theories and explanations concerning the loss of grammatical gender.

4. Reasons for variation and theories revisited

In this chapter I will discuss the theories presented in Chapter 2 on the basis of the analysis of the material. The discussion will be divided into two main parts, addressing the so-called system-internal and system-external explanations separately. Whereas Chapter 2 was aimed at introducing the theoretical background and the previous studies concerning the (disappearance of) grammatical gender, this chapter seeks to re-evaluate and comment on the theories based on the findings of the data analysed in Chapter 3.

The purely technical explanations account for *how*, but not *why*, the change occurred. The semantic and pragmatic considerations should also be taken into account, although there are no straightforward answers. Beardsmore (1971), studying grammatical gender in spoken French in contact with Flemish in Brussels, suggests that the choice of gender is dependent on individual and sociolinguistic factors rather than internal factors in the structures of language (Beardsmore 1971:141); the gender system is not necessarily the same for all speakers, but depends on the social and linguistic background and attitudes of the individual speakers (Beardsmore 1971:145; Curzan 2003:128). Many explanations concentrate on the extralinguistic factors such as language contact. Language change will be here considered as *Zusammenspiel* (see e.g. Markus 1995) involving both external and internal factors (see e.g. Vachek 1962). None of the theories discussed seem to be able to alone explain the change from grammatical to 'natural' gender, but combining different theories and different levels of language use will provide a fuller picture. The various aspects are closely intertwined and although the division here has been made based on language-internal and language-external factors, it is only a conventional division.

4.1 Language-internal

Change can be thought of as inherent to language. The systemic explanations seek answers in the structure of the language itself; language change is not seen as arbitrary, but even seemingly radical structural changes follows certain patterns which must be inherent in the system. The inherited system (in this case Old English, and going farther back, the Germanic/Indo-European system) may contain accidental features not realised in the language at all times but which, triggered by external motivations such as language contact, may be reinterpreted and given new systemic motivation. In other words, the language realises covert categories already embedded into the system and now give new overt interpretations to them (Samuels 1977: 50, Millar 2000). In these explanations, foreign influence (here primarily Scandinavian, [Norman/Old] French and Latin) does not impose any such changes onto the recipient language (Old/Middle English) which were not, in fact, already present at the language.

The factors and theories which will be addressed include phonological changes and the spread of certain features by analogy. Various possible semantic and discourse motivations will also be taken into consideration. After that, more specific theories such as masculinisation, neuterisation and *Genuswechsel* ('gender change') will be discussed.

4.1.1 Phonological motivations

The most common explanations concern the phonological changes in the late OE period and their effect in the forms of the nouns. The sound changes (particularly the "Germanic stress rule", the shifting of stress towards initial syllables) levelled particularly the vowels in unstressed syllables, shaping the nominal forms and causing gradual erosion in the endings (see Curzan 2003:43).

Moore (1928) has described of the phonological changes in this period and argues that "the rapid and extensive morphological development ... between 1050 and 1300

was the result of a highly complex cooperation of sound changes, syntactic changes and analogical changes” (Moore 1928:238). The changes, the beginnings of which can already be seen in the eleventh century texts and continuing until the twelfth century included the levelling of unstressed vowels to a uniform (written) *-e* and the disappearance of the final unstressed nasal (Moore 1928 239-240).

The inflections were gradually levelled to a uniform *-e*, which became generalised as the standard nominal and adjectival ending. The processes whereby the morphological forms of the endings were shaped were probably largely simultaneous (Moore 1928:242). This levelling can be evidenced from the data at various points; for instance, the plural dative *-um* ending has become largely marginalised, and often levelled to *-en*; Moore states that the “apparent stability” of the word-final *-m* (e.g. *of his nasþyrlum*; *wið tobrocenum heafod*) is a graphic phenomenon and does not carry grammatical meaning any longer (Moore 1928:243). This is supported by the fact that the example *wið tobrocenum heafod* 'for a broken head' appears in the previous line as *wið tobrocene heafod* (PD 86:85a).

The stress the phonological system was under affected not only the nominal (and adjectival) morphological endings, but also the forms of the demonstratives, causing what Millar calls *ambiguity in form* (Millar 2000:206); the different demonstratives became phonologically more and more similar, until merging together was inevitable.

The erosion of inflectional endings is, however, not sufficient in explaining *why* the changes should have occurred. The technical explanations describe the way in which the changes occurred in the language, but do not offer explanations as to why these sound changes should have taken place when they did. The next section will take into consideration the possible semantic and discursive factors involved.

4.1.2 Discourse motivations

Jones is one of the most influential recent scholars of early English grammatical gender. He suggests a temporary subsystem during the LOE/EME period, when overt function marking would have prevailed over overt gender marking. Due to the fuzziness present in the system of gender and case categories (partly because of the phonological

changes), the speakers were forced too reinterpret the rules of the existing system; instead of trying to preserve both gender and case systems, gender would have become extraneous and the functional ('case') marking would have prevailed (Jones 1988:18). This is what Millar (2000) terms "conservative radicalism", an attempt to save what is possible to save from the dying system (Millar 2000:41, 63). The reasons for the pressure for the system are various, combining phonological developments alongside with external impact on the system.

Thus it seems that under these pressures, it was not possible to maintain both a fully working gender system and a case system (Jones 1988; Samuels 1977:50). The remaining inflectional endings came to be interpreted as case markers without a gender distinction, as was seen for instance with the genitive/plural *-es* earlier.

However, the confusion in the case marking caused that system to dismantle rapidly as well. The subsystem Jones proposes would have been in existence precisely at the time the data in this study dates from. This temporary system, however, would have been too unstable to cope with the pressures coming from outside; the external pressure (extensive language contact on one side with Old Norse and on the other side with French) would have caused the system to disintegrate (Millar 2003:64; for further discussion on language contact and various theories concerning that see 4.2.1).

Such a temporary subsystem is largely speculative and difficult to prove although the theory is plausible. Assessing the existence of such a system from the data proves fruitful mainly with regard to PD, although there are only few consistent patterns in the usage which do not adhere to OE standard use. The inflectional endings in PD could thus be taken to represent case marking regardless of gender. In B34 these distinctions have been abandoned almost altogether, and the language represents early Middle English, whereas C303 can by and large be said to essentially represent Late West Saxon.

With regard to case, nominative and accusative on one side, and accusative and dative on the other show signs of amalgamation, thus leaving only genitive markings largely untouched. The differences between B34 and the earlier texts in the data are quite striking with regard to gender marking; while the case distinctions are preserved (to a certain extent), the gender-specific markers have disappeared, save for a few exceptions. Even these exceptions appear either in expected collocations (*to þer eorðe*)

or in connection with personification, which places them outside the grammatical gender system as such. Thus the plausibility of the existence of a subsystem is supported by the evidence from this data. While the conformation to OE patterns seems, at least on the surface, quite dominant, the fluctuation in the gender system (particularly in PD; C303 is rather more conservative, yet it shows tendencies towards fluctuation as well) is too dominant to be dismissed as scribal variation or errors.

The semantic confusion in the terminology was referred to in the introduction (Chapter 1). If the system is thought to have switched from *grammatical* to *natural* gender, the semantic motivations need to be taken into account in explaining the shift. Gender and sex as social and cultural constructions influence the perceptions of gender as a grammatical category. Particularly the terminology has an effect in how the gender is conceived of. The OE grammatical gender system can be thought to be based at least partially on semantic motivations²⁴. Apart from the few aforementioned exceptions (such as *mægden* 'maiden', OE neut.; *wifmann* 'woman', OE masc.), the nouns designating human animate beings adhered to the natural sex/gender of the referent. Some traditionally quoted examples are some of the nouns referring to females; *wifmann* 'woman' (OE masc.), *wif* 'woman, wife' (OE neut.), *mægden* 'maiden' (neut.). Particularly towards the end of the period, the human animate nouns begin to show natural rather than grammatical gender; instead of *se wifman* (masc.) we find *seo wifman* with the feminine article, and instead of *þe wiifa* (neut.), *seo ærest wiifa* (Mitchell 1986:§ 69, according to Jones 1988:11). These exceptions sometimes tended to take anaphoric pronouns according to their natural, not grammatical, gender already in OE (Curzan 2003:62). Thus it would have been natural to extend this system of reference to cover the inanimate nouns as well so that nouns which were male in the 'real' world would take masculine pronouns, females feminine and all other nouns, particularly inanimates, neuter. Distance from the antecedent noun is also likely to have an effect (Curzan 2003:127-8).

In explaining linguistic change, children's language acquisition theories have also been adduced as evidence. The role of children in restructuring the language particularly at unstable contexts such as the extensive language contact would have brought about in

²⁴ Fodor (1959) argues that there is originally no semantic basis to grammatical gender (Fodor 1959: 9). Here the representative system is assumed to be the Old English (Germanic) system as it had developed thus far.

this period; if there were several variants to choose from, the children are most likely to choose the most common ones but also the simpler ones (Romaine 1989:199; Andersen 1988, according to Trudgill 1989:229, Traugott 1973:263). Instead of explaining the changes with child-language acquisition theories, Trudgill argues that the “post-adolescents” rather than the younger children are more likely to introduce new and simpler forms, and the imperfect learning abilities of the adults explain the simplification in the system (Trudgill 1989:229, 232).

The more specific theories concerning the nature of the change (masculinisation, neuterisation, *Genuswechsel*) will be discussed in the next section.

4.1.3 Masculinisation, neuterisation and *Genuswechsel*

The theories analysing or describing the specific nature of the changes in the gender system include *Genuswechsel*, or lexical gender reclassification (the assignment of a grammatical gender different from the original), *masculinisation* and *neuterisation*. The external impact together with semantic and phonological considerations (e.g. semantic equivalents or cover terms in the recipient language or the association of suffixal elements in the donor language with certain grammatical gender characteristics in English) has been argued to have influenced the gender assignment of English nouns. One side of the discussion concerns new borrowed lexical items; with a certain amount of fluctuation in the grammatical system, to which gender class are the new words entering the language assigned to? On the other hand, native nouns or nouns borrowed earlier into English could also be said to change their gender in ME, or to take certain characteristics formerly associated with certain gender class or classes. As texts were translated directly from these languages, the gender of the corresponding noun in the superstratum language might easily be assigned to the English noun as well (see Mustanoja 1960:45).

Mustanoja argues for strong French and Latin influence on the written early Middle English. The impact of French is further complicated by the different French

dialects (Anglo-Norman, Picard) and their variation with regard to gender; "the confusion is believed to have contributed to the remarkable variation in the gender of ME nouns borrowed from French" (Mustanoja 1960:47). Studies done on modern-day languages (e.g. Beardsmore 1971, studying language contact between present-day French and Flemish in the bilingual Brussels) suggest that the gender in the source language could have an influence on the borrowed lexical items (Beardsmore 1971:149); this depends on the linguistic knowledge of the speakers. In early medieval England, only a few speakers would have known Latin for instance. While the grammatical gender in the source language (Latin, French or Scandinavian) could have influenced the gender in English, this would have depended on the background of the speakers. Both the geographical area (French influence was stronger in the area around London, whereas Scandinavian influence was initially largely confined to the northern areas) and the social position (Latin and French as socially prestigious languages and Old Norse spoken more commonly in the society) would have had a great effect.

Welna (1980) comments on the masculinisation tendency of borrowed nouns, remarking that the majority of nouns borrowed from French and Latin were ascribed a masculine gender classification and that there was a tendency to eliminate neuter and, to a lesser extent, feminine (Welna 1980:400). The tendency for nouns to adopt inflectional endings associated with OE masculine a-stem nouns (e.g. *-es*) has frequently been commented upon (e.g. Clark 1957:112-113; Mustanoja 1960:51)

Multiple-gender and plural antecedent nouns were more likely to take on neuter pronouns, according to Curzan, while feminine inanimate nouns had the highest percentage of grammatical gender agreement (Curzan 2003:73). The feminine pronouns are also more prominent as the forms are more clearly distinguishable from masculine/neuter forms which tended to overlap.

There are no clear tendencies for masculine or neuter nouns to assume any grammatical properties of the feminine either in the nominal form or in the determiners although there are some exceptions in PD. In anaphora, feminine pronouns are more prevalent (partly because the neuter and masculine forms tend to overlap). This *anaphoric feminisation* (Curzan 2003:109-110) is particularly prevalent with regard to personification, which should be treated as a separate phenomenon from grammatical gender although connected to it.

The nominal forms can be said to show masculinisation tendencies in adopting patterns and forms associated with the strong masculine category in OE (such as the extension of the ending *-es*). The anaphoric references to inanimate nouns, however, show more tendencies to take neuter pronouns, while animate (particularly human) beings are referred to with pronouns agreeing with the natural gender of the antecedent noun. The gaining of ground of the 'natural' gender, i.e. the grammatical properties followed the natural sex affiliations of the object rather than abstracted grammatical properties, caused the inanimate nouns to follow the neuter.

It can also be argued that there was no change in the grammatical gender; gender simply became irrelevant to inflections (Jones 1967:129). *Genusverlust* or the loss of gender properties (Moore 1921) was caused by ambiguity which placed the whole system under threat and whereby it was compromised (Millar 2000:40); *þe(t)* was conceived of rather as a general, sex-neutral term.

The descriptions presume the preservation of the system and therefore do not explain the loss. If individual nouns were indeed assuming grammatical properties from another class, it would presuppose still functional gender categories whereas the whole system was in fact abandoned. *Genuswechsel* under the influence of the grammatical gender assignment in the donor language also presupposes a sufficient command of that language (particularly Latin/French), whereas the change could be argued to have originated from beneath rather than from above through written texts (Millar 2000:39).

Rather than changing gender, the system could also be said to have gradually moved towards simpler classification, where the semantic feature animacy ([+animate], [+inanimate]) had a growing role in determining the grammatical properties of the nouns (Markus 1995).

4.1.4 Animacy/inanimacy

The levelling of inflections and the subsequent confusion in the nominal forms as well as in the attributes strengthened the distinction between animate and inanimate objects. Instead of a three-gender division the distinction between animate and inanimate objects

assumed more importance (Markus 1995). Only the nouns which had clear natural sex properties (mainly human animate) followed the masculine/feminine distinctions.

Whereas human animate nouns were more likely to take natural gender pronouns already in OE, there was also a growing tendency for inanimate nouns to favour the neuter pronouns in the anaphoric references; this extension of 'natural' gender to inanimate antecedent nouns seems to have coincided with and strengthened the distinction between inanimate and animate (Curzan 2003:92, 112; Markus 1995). The human animate nouns conform to natural gender assignment in all of the texts, although the comparison in particular between feminine animate nouns in the data is problematic because of the almost complete absence of those nouns in PD.

While the gender concord in anaphora for inanimate nouns in PD largely corresponds to OE patterns, with certain exceptions, this is not as clear-cut in the *vitae*. C303, however, contains only few anaphoric references from which the grammatical gender of the inanimate referent could be determined; in this respect B34 offers more scope for examination. While animate nouns are without exception referred to with their 'naturally' gendered pronouns regardless of their OE grammatical gender (*bis meiden .. ha .. hire* 'this maiden .. she ... her', OE neut.), the inanimate nouns show more variation. Nevertheless, the neuter pronoun is clearly prevalent, and a majority of inanimate nouns use the neuter or gender-unspecific pronoun (*mi meiðhad .. hit* 'my virginity .. it', OE masc.; *hire liflade .. hit* 'her (course of) life', OE fem.). *Unwiht* 'evil spirit, devil' (OE *wiht* 'person, creature, being', fem./neut.) is referred to with the pronouns *hit/his* [106].

[106] *an unsehen unwiht ... se grislich, se ladlich, þet ne mahte hit na mon redliche areachen, ant his twa honden to his curnede cneon heteueste ibunnden* (B34 60:27-29)
'a different devil .. so grisly, so loathsome, that no one could easily find words to describe it, with both his hands tightly bound to his gnarled knees'²⁵

There are, however, exceptions to this general rule. The anaphoric pronouns referring to animate and inanimate objects have been further discussed in section 3.5, and the *personification* of inanimate objects will be discussed in section 4.2.3.1 below.

Thus it can be seen that there are differences in the treatment of animate and

²⁵ Translation by Millet, Wogan-Browne (1990:61).

inanimate nouns; in all of the texts, the animate (particularly human) take gendered pronouns only according to the natural gender of the referent even when it clashes with the grammatical gender of the noun; similarly, following the development, inanimate nouns show more tendency to use the neuter pronouns.

4.2 Language/system – external

As no language functions in a vacuum, the system-external explanations are of considerable importance in discussing these changes. It is the users of language who shape linguistic behaviour; thus, talking of language contact for instance it should be borne in mind that 'codes neither generate themselves nor control their own tangled evolution' (McIntosh 1994:137). The developments and changes occurring at this period can be seen on a continuum. The different processes affecting the language – internal and external likewise - worked together; language is in a constant state of flux, and this variation can be regarded at the same time on diachronical level and on synchronical level (geographical variation) (McIntosh 1994:137). “Normal” can only be regarded as normal in certain social contexts (Trudgill 1989:227). This section will address the questions of language (and dialect) contact to provide the social contextualisation to the change. After that, the influence of the literary models and standards as well as the genre differences will be addressed.

4.2.1 Foreign influence: language contact, code-mixing, creolisation theories

Language contact is one of the most widely discussed issues relating to the loss of grammatical gender in EME. On one side, there was ongoing contact with Old Norse since the eighth century; and in 1066 the Norman Conquest brought Old/Norman French into rather close contact with English. In addition, Latin also had an impact as the *lingua franca* and *ecclesiastica*. Nevertheless there was continuity in the use of the

vernacular throughout the period. The Norman Conquest did not cause a complete disruption in the use of English, and while Latin as the language of the church continued to influence particularly the written usage at this period, its influence was confined largely to the clergy who were literate in Latin²⁶. There are widely divergent opinions on the extent of impact language change had on one hand, and on the question which of the languages had the strongest impact.

The impact of Norse was strengthened by the close relationship and the similarities between the two languages, although the extent of mutual intelligibility is uncertain. Nevertheless the friction caused by for instance conflicting nominal endings could have acted as a catalyst for the changes (Millar 2003:43, 51). The influence was felt first and the strongest in the Northern dialects, but the changes spread throughout the language.

Although the French influence in the society was substantial as well, the seeds for the changes (see particularly section 5.1.1 for the phonological changes) were planted already before 1066 (Millar 2003:45, Poussa 1982:71). Even if the impact from French did not initiate the changes, the lexicon in particular was certainly influenced on a massive scale. Its use as the language of administration and church contributed to the prestige and therefore the influence. The influx of borrowed words would have caused ambiguities in the already fluctuating case and gender system. Many scholars place great importance on the French influence in explaining the loss of gender (e.g. Bailey and Maroldt 1977; Danchev 1997:90). Berndt ([1965] 1969), evaluating the extent of French influence, concludes that although there was decided influence from French, there was no disruption in the use of the vernacular (Berndt [1965] 1969:378). The amount of French loanwords before 1250 and the French influence on the ME morphology was relatively modest (Dalton-Puffer 1996:222, Dekeyser 1986:263-4).

The principal effect of language contact on the grammatical gender system is the erosion or mixing of the gender and case categories. While the established borrowings particularly from the Scandinavian languages were fully integrated into the language and use native inflectional morphology, the newly borrowed items in EME often do not adhere to the native patterns and could have had a major contribution on the final collapse of the system (Millar 2003:66-67). As can be seen, the opinions on the extent

²⁶ 'Literate' (Lat. *litteratus*) was often confined to refer to those who knew Latin; thus, mere ability to read (and possibly also to write) in the vernacular did not entail literacy, nor the ability to read Latin (Clanchy 1993:226-227).

of the influence are highly divergent, and assessing the verity of the various statements is highly complex.

Since the 1970s, creole and pidgin linguistics have offered alternative means of looking at the language contact situation. The terminology as well as the theories are diverse, and different scholars talk about for instance *creole*, *creoloid*, *koiné*, *koinéoid* and *interlanguage*. A Middle English creole or creoloid has been argued to have developed either based on French (e.g. Bailey and Maroldt 1977, who state that “(i)t cannot be doubted that (ME) is a mixed language, or creole” [1977:22]) or on Scandinavian (e.g. Poussa 1982). These theories would argue for a stronger interference on both lexical and structural level in the substratum language, OE or Anglo-Saxon²⁷. Whereas the subsystem discussed in 4.1.2 was conceived to have developed primarily through reinterpretation of form and function based on inherent systemic motivations, the creolisation theories account the change largely or solely on language contact.

Although there are various different definitions of *pidgin* and *creole*, most of the definitions of a creole commonly presuppose a precedent state of pidgin; pidgin is defined as a simplified mixed language not spoken by anyone as the native language. A creole has native speakers and its grammar has been gradually developing into a more complex one (e.g. Mühlhäuser 1997:4-7). In ME creole theories, the process is usually treated as gradual simplification. Some scholars talk about “Norsified English” and some would argue that the influence was so strong the resulting form of language could be called a creole. The term *koiné*²⁸ is also used to describe the contact situation between English and Old Norse (Poussa 1982, Trudgill 1989, Millar 2000:61, Dawson 2003). Similar processes between the various English dialects could be termed *semi-koinés* or *koinéoids* (by analogy from *creoloid*).

Many scholars, however, argue against the *creolisation* theories (see for example Curzan 2003:89, 123-124; Mitchell 1994:165). The definition of *creole* also presents a problem. If a creole is taken to mean a subsequent development from a simpler form of language, a pidgin, it is an inappropriate term to describe the stage of the language between Old and Middle English. Mostly the term *creolisation* used in the context of

²⁷ Sometimes differentiating between these terms can be used to imply continuity in the language use (Old English) or to emphasise the differences (Anglo-Saxon).

²⁸ *Koiné*, as defined by Siegel (1985) is “the stabilized result of mixing of linguistic subsystems such as regional or literary dialects ... It usually serves as a lingua franca among speakers of the different contributing varieties ... (and) is characterized by a mixture of features of these varieties and most often by reduction or simplification in comparison” (Siegel 1985:363; according to Dawson 2003:7).

Middle English refers to a simplification process, rather than a gradual complication process (Dachev 1997:80). Fisiak (1977) proposes the concept of *interlanguage* to explain the changes; the process resembled *pidginisation* without necessarily any consequent *creolisation* (Fisiak 1977:249; according to Dachev 1997:80). The opponents to the creole theories argue that there was no abrupt change, but the change in the grammatical system was a long, gradual process, the seeds of which had already been planted in OE and conform to patterns of historical change (Görlach 1986:331; Dachev 1997:79; Curzan 2003:123; Mühlhäuser 1997:240)

There are differences in the usage of all these terms; the advocates of the creole theories seem to, in most cases, to refer to ME as a whole, that is, the outcome of the language contact; while *interlanguage* or the temporary subsystem proposed by Jones refer rather to only a temporary state of language. The theories nevertheless represent basically the same idea. Putting the matter of terminology aside, the rapid changes in this period could plausibly entail some kind of a temporary subsystem. Whether this system – which was not static diachronically or synchronically, i.e. on dialectal level – was brought about by language contact or by system-internal motivations, the explanation is likely to lie somewhere in the middle. The extensive contact with Old Norse and French (and, to a somewhat lesser extent, Latin) would have accelerated the changes once they had received the initial impetus. This is also the stance Görlach (1986) takes; the changes, in his words

can be explained as a reduction of redundancy inherent to the Old English system, but the geographical spread of innovative features illustrates that the special needs of communication in the Danelaw triggered off or speeded up changes in English that might otherwise have taken much longer to happen (Görlach 1986:340)

Thus, the answer is not straightforwardly or solely the result of language contact. Neither did any one language – Old or Anglo-French/Old Norse – alone cause the kind of major breakdown of the grammatical system as has been described here. Rather, the interplay of internal and external factors and the different language contacts working together caused the system to break down. Next I will turn to examining the dialectal variation.

4.2.2 Geographical variation

Similarly to language contact, it is possible to talk about dialect contact. Kitson suggests that grammatical gender was a dialectal variable in OE (Kitson 1990:185). This could certainly be true for ME to a greater extent; while the majority of the extant texts in (late) OE are written in the standardised variety, there is no such standard in EME. Rather, the extant texts are written in a multitude of varieties or dialects. Some are closer to a local written standard than a geographically defined dialect (such as AB-language used in B34), some (e.g. *Ormulum*) are written in a highly individual form of language. Nor were there clear geographical boundaries for dialects, but rather a continuum and variation within dialects as well as between them (Benskin 1994:171).

The corpus study carried out by Curzan (2003; see p.5 above) suggested varying patterns for the different dialectal areas. The East Midland texts (*Ormulum*, *Trinity Homilies*, *Peterborough Chronicle* and *Vices and Virtues*²⁹) generally showed highest frequency of natural gender agreement in the anaphoric pronouns whereas the southern texts (*Bodley Homilies*, *History of the Holy Rood-Tree* and *Peri Didaxeon*) were considerably more conservative, as was the only Kentish text (*Vespasian Homilies*) studied. The West Midlands (*Ancrene Wisse*, the *Katherine* group) fall into a transitional category, as although natural gender concord prevails in the West Midlands texts, there are still traces of the grammatical gender system. Although *Ayenbite of Inwyrt*, a mid-fourteenth century Kentish text, still preserves grammatical gender, the late thirteenth-century *Kentish Sermons* demonstrates the spread of natural gender agreement (Curzan 2003:122-124). Some of the forms in these texts may be taken to represent dialectal variation; PD is a southern text while B34 is from West Midlands; C303, while predominantly West Saxon, is suggested to have some Kentish, Anglian and Northumbrian influence (Clayton and Magennis 1994:104-105). variation With

²⁹ *Vices and Virtues*, though an East Midland text, is more accurately located to Essex and is considerably more conservative in this respect than the other East Midland texts, which are generally more innovative.

reference to the masculinisation/neuterisation tendencies discussed earlier, Clark (1957) observes that while the *Peterborough Chronicle* shows masculinisation in the forms, *Lindisfarne Gospels* uses neuter rather than masculine as the default category (Clark 1957:113).

Influence of Norse was much greater on the northern dialects as pointed out in the previous section and while French influence was stronger in the London area, the influence was perhaps not so much dialectal but superstratum influence controlled by prestige (Millar 2000:47). The relative status and prestige of the local dialects would also have had an effect; however, the northern regional dialects probably had a fairly low status compared to the southern high status literary languages, yet it was these areas which originated the 'great changes' which were to affect all regions (Millar 2000:47, 61).

4.2.3 Literary influence and written standards

The influence of earlier writings is considered here as an external factor affecting the use of language (Vachek 1962:435). The ME texts are written in a variety of dialects, and, without a clear authoritative model (such as the OE Wessex standard) the dialectal features are intertwined with the individual scribes' idiolects. Local 'standards', such as the south-western AB-language³⁰, did not exercise any wider influence, and the scribes were free to translate the texts they were copying into their own varieties. However, there was continuity in the written tradition, and the written texts are likely to preserve some features of their exempla and forms reminiscent of earlier forms.

The language in the data, as has been previously pointed out, does not represent the actual spoken language of the period; rather, it has been affected by various factors, of which earlier written languages – both Old English and Latin – is one. A major literary influence at this period would have been Latin texts. All of the texts in the data are copies or translations/adaptations of originally Latin material. Thus the conventions in Latin texts, whether hagiographical or scientific, affect at least to some extent the texts

³⁰ Comprising *Ancrene Wisse* (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 402) and the texts of the so-called *Katherine Group* (Ms. Bodley 34).

in their textual form but also in the language use. In addition to the Christian symbolism and allegory transmitted via Latin texts, the grammatical gender of particular Latin nouns could have affected those in English (Mustanoja 1960:45-47). Although this is not likely to have affected the system as a whole, it could have had an influence on certain written usages.

The OE Late West Saxon (LSW) standard lies behind all of the texts. Naturally, the farther removed in time (and in place) the texts are, the less the language conforms to the standard usages. The language in the manuscripts C303 and PD cannot be thought to represent the language as it was actually used in the twelfth/thirteenth century; rather, they represent an attempt to reproduce the language of the older times and thus a somewhat archaic form of language. While most of the extant Late OE texts have been written in the West Saxon Standard, from the twelfth century onwards, a multitude of written dialects begins to emerge. These written varieties were affected by the earlier written usages on the one hand and on the contemporary written forms on the other. In addition there were other extralinguistic influences (discussed above), and there is considerable fluctuation and instability in the forms (Bauer 1986:203-204). This can be clearly seen in the data, which shows a range of mixture of older and newer forms.

Another aspect of literary influence concerning particularly the hagiographic material is Christian symbolism and allegory (Mustanoja 1960:48). This will be discussed further in the next section about personification.

4.2.3.1 Personification

Personification may also explain some cases where the grammatical gender seemingly survives. It is more likely to show in the anaphora than in the forms of the noun or its determiners, as personification entails (although not necessarily) differing from the grammatical features. Personification could be conceived of as a literary device rather than representing grammatical patterns; therefore it is natural that it should occur in literary settings such as the saints' lives rather than in the strictly factual medical recipes. An example from B34 is *sawle* 'soul' (OE fem.), which referred to as hire on

two occasions [107]; the definite article used is *þe* [108].

[107] *mi sawle .. heouen hire into heouene* (B34 54:7-8)
'my soul ... raise it (her) to heaven'
mi sawle .. nabbe Ich bute hire ane (B34 54:18-19) 'my
soul... I have nothing but it (her)'

[108] *þe engles, as ha beren þe sawle in hare bearmes*
(B34 82:18) 'the angels, carrying the soul in their arms'

Feminine personal pronoun and the definite article *þe* are likewise used of *sunne* 'sun' (OE fem.) [109]. Some nouns such as *sun* (OE fem.), *moon* (OE masc.) and *star* (OE masc.) retain their original OE gender assignment until 14th century, although this might be due to OE or classical literary tradition rather than to be seen as an example of retention of grammatical gender (Mustanoja 1960:46).

[109] *þe sunne .. hire rune* (B34 58:37) 'the sun .. its (her)
course' (OE fem.)
þe mone ant te steorren þe walkeð bi þe weolcne (B34
60:1) 'the moon and the stars which move through the sky'
(OE masc.)

In these examples (*sawle/sunne*), a feminine anaphoric pronoun is used for nouns with OE feminine gender. There are also examples of masculine nouns used with a feminine pronoun or a feminine referent, in a context where it is clearly a case of personification rather than a misplaced attempt to save grammatical gender. In the first example [110], the personal pronoun *ha* 'she' is more likely to refer to *crune* 'crown' (OE *corona*, masc. < Lat. *corona*) than the preceding noun *culure* 'dove' (OE fem.); in the next example, however, which appears some paragraphs later, a similar construction, possibly affected by the preceding paragraph, occurs with the noun *rode* 'cross' (OE fem.) [111].

[110] *com a culure beorinde, se briht as þah ha bearnde,*
a guldene crune, ant sette hire o þet seli meidenes heaued
(B34 76:15-16) 'a dove came carrying a golden crown'

which was so bright it (she) burned, and set it (her) on the head of the blessed maiden'

[111] *come a **culure** of heouene, se briht as þah **ha** bearnde, wið a **rode*** (B34 78:31-32) 'a heavenly dove came, as bright as if it burned, with a cross' (OE fem.)

Personification in general plays a rather prominent role in the saints' lives. As a literary device, its use was fairly common in religious narratives. As we have seen, however, most of the nouns personified have been of OE feminine gender; with the aid of influence from Latin literature, the grammatical gender assignment would not have been difficult to shift into a semantic one. All of the examples here are from the thirteenth century life of Margaret; the earlier text, C303, preserves – or attempts to preserve – the actual grammatical gender, where the combination of grammatical and semantic considerations could cause confusion. The only instance, which could be thought of as personification, is Margaret's reference to her 'beautiful virginity' (*min mægþhad fægre*). Virginity (*mægþhád*, OE masc.) was often portrayed as feminine, as were other virtues, in Latin and through that, English literature. In B34, it is referred to as 'queen' [112] and 'flower', and it is also characterised as a 'jewel' (*3imstan*, OE masc.) [113]; the determiners and anaphoric pronouns used are *þe* and *hit*.

[112] *þu chure **meiðhad**, þe of alle **mihtes** is **cwen*** (B34 76:24-25) 'you chose virginity, which is the queen of all virtues' (*meiðhad*, OE masc.; *mihte*, OE fem.; *cwen*, OE fem.)

[113] *Ich habbe a deore **3imstan** ... mi **meiðhad** I mene, **blostme** brihtest* (B34 48:1-3) 'I have a precious jewel ... my virginity, I mean, the brightest of all flowers'

4.2.4 Genre differences

The texts in the data can be thought to represent two different text-types (defined on a linguistic basis) or genres (defined contextually) (Diller and Görlach 2001:7). MSS

C303 and B34 represent saints' lives or hagiography, while PD is a medical text and can be classified as a scientific text (see Chapter 2). Here the differences are discussed between the two genres and what possible implications that genre can have in the linguistic usage.

The text-type may also have a bearing on how the text is constructed and what kind of language is used. With genres as different as those represented by the texts in this data, this is likely to have an effect on the analysis. To begin with, the nature and form of the texts is highly divergent. While PD represents a scientific text-type in the form of medical recipes, the two *vitae* represent a literary narrative form. Both types are formulaic, albeit in a different manner. The saints' lives adhere to the restrictions placed by the Latin tradition of *vitae*, which sometimes even affects the syntactic structures. There are various expected collocations and structures in all of the texts (seen for example in the repetition of *seo eadiga Margareta, þa fægre fæmne, ða wearð se gerefa swiðe yrre* 'then the reeve became angry'; *þe eadi meiden, mi meiðhad* 'my virginity'; *þisne læcecraft man sceal ... nim þanne ... eft sona* 'this leechdom is for the man .. then take... and after that').

The narrative form allows for third person descriptions as well as dialogues and monologues in the first person, while the more impersonal style of PD only allows for third person singular references. These, in fact, are always generic or refer to 'the man' (e.g. *þes læcecraft sceal þan mann þ spiwan wyllan* 'this leechcraft is for the man who wants to vomit'); there are no references to women. This lack of female animate antecedent nouns clearly has an effect on the analysis, particularly as these references abound in the *vitae*. The effect of the genre extends obviously to lexical choices as well. The number of loanwords for instance is much greater in PD, and the fact that it was presumably intended to be used as a practical manual has an effect on the scribes' linguistic choices.

Saints' lives as a literary genre employs a wide range of techniques. Although religious in subject-matter, the texts were adapted to suit the audiences; perhaps to guarantee a wider readership, literary conventions and various rhetorical devices were employed in order to make the stories more intriguing. The conventional Latin form and rhetorical patterns dictated the essence and limited the form of the OE versions to some extent despite the adaptations to AS verse form (Woolf 1966:40,64-5). The vernacular

tradition was nevertheless strong and the Anglo-Saxon saints' lives were not faithful reproductions of the Latin models, but rather adaptations of the material.

All of the texts in the data can be considered quite conservative. Particularly C303 attempts to reproduce the language of earlier times; linguistic evidence (among other, such as palaeographical, evidence), however, points to the fact that the text was in fact composed not long before it was copied down in the manuscript in the mid-twelfth century (see Chapter 3). PD, from a later manuscript, shows considerably more varied usage although being remarkably conservative for a scientific text. Often held to be fairly conservative, AB-language could also be regarded rather as innovative and modern for its time and dialectal area, although compared to other texts such as Peterborough Chronicle, which is considerably earlier, B34 shows a relatively high degree of conservatism. Saints' lives as a genre is by definition fairly conservative and C303 in particular may be regarded as deliberately archaic.

4.3 Discussion

Combining the system-internal and system-external explanations and theories creates a picture which encompasses various sides of linguistic change. Taking as a starting point that the changes were inherent to the structure of the language and 'natural' in a universal scope; examining language change in the Indo-European languages has shown some general tendencies towards simplification (Trudgill 1989:231). With the extensive language contact with both Old Norse and Old/Norman French (and, on a somewhat different level, Latin) the phonological levelling, which had its seeds in OE (thus before the importation of loanwords from French on a massive scale), would have accelerated the changes. What made the loss of grammatical gender possible would have been partly due to the semantic basis of the gender system on one hand and the confusion with the case markings on another; the system was reinterpreted to favour the case markings (which were subsequently or simultaneously lost as well) or the natural sex or

gender, thus making the division between animates and inanimates rather than between three grammatical categories. As the categories overlapped in OE, the different forms and their grammatical meanings would have caused ambiguity in the system.

As the phonological developments shaping the morphological endings by making them less distinctive, confusion over the gender marking was inevitable. Even without distinctive nominal (and adjectival) forms, it might have been possible to maintain the grammatical gender system with the help of demonstratives and anaphora at least for a short while. While the personal pronouns indeed still in PDE distinguish between *he*, *she* and *it*, the demonstratives were affected by the sound changes. It has been suggested that it was this fundamental ambiguity in the form as well as in the function which caused the system to break down (Millar 2000: 26).

The grammatical gender system in modern Germanic languages is either neuter-default (e.g. Icelandic and Faroese) or masculine-default (e.g. West and Continental North Germanic). There are also two modern Germanic languages without grammatical gender system; Present Day English and Afrikaans (Rice and Steinmetz 2000:§40). Whereas the neuter-default system seems to derive from Proto-Germanic, the masculine-default has been argued to be the result of a gender shift resulting in a restructured gender system (Steinmetz 2006:1418). The arguments for neuterisation or masculinisation of the English system in LOE/EME can be connected to the sociolinguistic factors and in particular to the influence of language contact; while Old English was a masculine-default language (Steinmetz 2006:1420), Old Norse was neuter-default (Steinmetz 2001, according to Trosterud 2006:1441).

The division between Old and Middle English is necessarily an artificial one, but there is some disagreement on where to start talking about Middle English. Despite the artificiality of the divisions, it is convenient to make a division between the different stages of the language. Sweet (1874) states that the transition period is the twelfth century (Sweet 1874:157-161, according to Kitson 1997:222); Malone (1930) places the starting point of ME to c.1100, regarding the tenth century as the transitional period between Old and Middle English (Malone 1930:117). Kitson (1997) argues that the twelfth century texts should still be regarded as OE (Kitson 1997:223). C303 is

composed largely in standard Late West Saxon, whereas PD exhibits considerably different usage and conventions with regard to grammatical gender and case.

Despite at least some extent of continuity throughout the EME period the disruption in the vernacular textual practices must have been affected by the Norman Conquest of 1066. Although there are surviving texts from the eleventh and twelfth centuries (such as the two texts in the data, C303 and PD), the amount of written texts is far smaller than from the preceding or following periods, and the texts from early thirteenth century (such as B34) show a language form quite far removed from that of surviving OE texts. Therefore, even if there was little or no disruption in the spoken vernacular of that period, the textual transmission must have been disturbed to some extent. Assuming that C303 and PD are copies from earlier texts, the language was similar enough for the scribes to understand, but probably not similar enough to their own language (dialect or idiolect) for them to copy faithfully all the forms; instead, their own use of language may be seen in the forms deviating from the LWS standard. A reference in B34 to *ald englis* as *ure ledene* 'our language' could be taken to show the continuity from that tradition; but also the adjective *ald* could be interpreted to signify removal from that form of language.

The variation in the forms could thus be partly due to conservatism in the written usage and scribal conventions; other texts from approximately the same period show similarly varied usage; while for instance Peterborough Chronicle, dating from mid-twelfth century shows a high degree of innovation and several strata of language (Clark 1957:109), the texts in these data show extremely varying conventions. Stylistic considerations must also be taken into account; to what degree was the use (or the absence) of certain forms a conscious stylistic choice made by the author or the scribe? In OE, partly because of the strong West Saxon literary tradition, partly because of the grammatical system itself, there was a certain amount of collocations; for instance, the feminine dative *þære* could only appear with a limited number of nouns because of the grammatical restrictions. (Samuels 1977:50-53). With the reinterpretation of the inflectional system, the given forms only remained in use in certain collocations, which in the data are exemplified by for instance the appearance of *þer* (OE *þære*) in B34 in connection with *eorðe* (*to þer eorðe*) but not otherwise. Similarly, *seo* in C303 features

only in three contexts (*seo eorðe*, similarly to B34; *seo eadiga Margareta* and *seo fæmne* 'the woman'); the scope is thus extremely limited.

The differences between the two genres the texts represent are not straightforwardly explained. The medical text, PD, shows quite a high degree of conservatism for a scientific text, but also when compared with B34. The remaining instances of grammatical gender usage in B34 can be attributed to literary and stylistic practices and devices; otherwise in this respect, B34 shows very few historical forms. These historical forms, on the other hand, abound in C303, which only shows a few deviations from OE usage. The same applies to loanwords and multiple-gender nouns; the numbers are considerably higher in PD and B34. Linguistically, however, B34 and C303 are considerably more unified, showing more consistent usage of grammatical forms (whether these forms be conservative or innovative) than PD, which shows various usages side by side. The literary and more personal style of the saints' lives, however, affects the lexical choices as well as the grammatical usage. The focus is largely on Margaret, and particularly in C303 there are only few references to inanimate objects, as the action is largely focused on Margaret and her persecutors. In B34 there are more references to inanimate objects and also personification can be clearly evinced from this text. The more impersonal style of PD as well as the recipe form of the text and the multitude of foreign nouns interspersed in the text likewise affects the linguistic usages.

There is no clear consensus among scholars over what caused the system to break down. Various alternative theories have been presented, although there is not any one straightforward explanation. This thesis has illustrated the extent of variation on different levels. Firstly, there is variation in the language itself. The language in the texts used as the data presents a rather complicated picture. Although every one of the texts, examined individually, form a unified whole linguistically, when compared with each other, they present a more fragmentary picture. In this chapter (Chapter 4) various theories purporting to explain this linguistic variation have been presented. The different theories have been discussed separately; it is, however, only when they are considered together that a clearer explanatory scheme can be constructed. Thus *Zusammenspiel*, referred to above, the interplay between internal and external factors in the change, has been emphasised. The picture nevertheless is by necessity somewhat of an oversimplification.

5. Conclusion

The thesis has dealt with grammatical gender in Early Middle English. More precisely, my objective was to examine how grammatical gender shows up in the structures in this period. The transition from Old to Middle English is characterised by extensive changes in the language. The material consisted of three texts dating from mid-twelfth century to early thirteenth century. These texts were examined from various points of view to determine the extent of grammatical gender features in the inflections and anaphora. The time span allowed for some diachronic comparison; the changes were extremely rapid at this time, and the data show extensive variation. The nature of the texts offered a chance for examining genre differences as well. The results showed that the language in the two lives of St. Margaret (dating from c.1150 and c.1225) differed from each other quite considerably with regard to conservatism in the nominal and modifier forms. C303 was extremely conservative, with only sporadic deviations from OE standards; B34, on the other hand, showed only few traces of grammatical gender. These instances could be conceived of as deliberately stylistically motivated. *Peri Didaxeon*, a medical text dating from mid- or late twelfth century, showed a considerable amount of grammatical gender congruence in the inflectional endings and particularly in anaphora, but also extensive variation and “semi”- or unhistorical forms.

Even though the discussion encompassed features such as the case system, and references have been made to various theories concerning larger entities and the linguistic system on the whole, the emphasis has been on grammatical gender and its manifestations in the data. Grammatical gender cannot be studied without reference to the larger context, be it sentence, text or the social and historical context.

The data was analysed in detail, examining the nominal forms as well as the forms of modifiers and anaphoric pronouns in order to discover whether and to what extent these forms preserve features of grammatical gender system as it stood in OE. The phonological levelling in the inflectional endings blurred the distinctions between

different genders. The earliest of the texts in the data, C303, is very conservative and the inflections and anaphora largely adhere to the OE system. Although deliberately archaic, there are forms and features testifying to the late composition date of the text (c.1150). The nominal and adjectival inflections show signs of levelling, and while the demonstrative system seems remarkably conservative, it might be argued that the literary form and certain expected collocations (such as *seo eadiga fæmne*) supports the preservation of these forms as for instance the already by this time marginalised *se/seo* forms rarely appear outside of these collocations. The anaphoric pronouns agree with the natural gender of the antecedent noun rather than the grammatical one; *mægden* 'maiden' (OE neut.) is consistently referred to with the feminine rather than the neuter pronoun.

The PD text represents most fully the transition period, showing the most varied usage in nominal forms as well as in the forms of the attributes and modifiers. Many of the forms which have become normal in PD are only very marginal or non-existent in C303; on the other hand, PD preserves a large range of OE forms already marginalised or non-existent in the later B34 text. Thus, diachronically, the data show the expected transition from full grammatical gender features to only sporadic forms with steadily progressing levelling of inflections and the rise of new forms such as the definite article *þe*. The extent of variation and the time span with the texts less than a century apart, however, makes the texts interesting. Because of the uncertainties in the dating of the texts and/or the manuscripts, the variation could also be regarded as synchronic variation in which case the wide range of forms testify to variety in the language at the time. The written standards lying behind all of the texts influence the forms to a varying extent; while C303 attempts to preserve the LWS forms as carefully as possible, only marginal exceptions remain in B34. Stylistically, therefore, both of the saints' lives are considerably more uniform than PD, which presents OE usage side by side with more innovative features.

The manuscript MS Bodley 34 dates from c.1250 (see Chapter 3 for further details). In this text, the levelling of inflectional endings is fairly far advanced. The language of the manuscript belongs to the so-called AB-language, which is, above all a literary language rather than a local dialect; the grammatical features displayed in the texts do not necessarily conform to the contemporary characteristics of spoken language. Rather,

they preserve various features representing a common literary tradition descending from OE West Saxon (D'Ardenne 1961:xxvii-xxviii). By the thirteenth century, the case system had been significantly simplified, and the gender-specific morphological features had ceased to mark gender alone. The restructuring of the system had led to a situation where the former morphological attributes no longer corresponded to the OE gender affiliation marking.

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SUOMENKIELINEN TIIVISTELMÄ

Tutkielma käsittelee kieliopillisen suvun säilymistä ja katoamista myöhäisessä muinaisenglannissa (*Old English*) ja varhaiskeskienglannissa (*Early Middle English*). Tällä nk. siirtymäajanjaksolla englannin kielessä tapahtui suuria muutoksia, joiden jälkeen kieltä yleisesti kutsutaan keskienglanniksi (*Middle English*), kun kielen muotoa ennen tätä ajanjaksoa kutsutaan muinaisenglanniksi (*Old English*). Tämä siirtymäkausi ja siihen liittyvät kieliopilliset, etenkin kieliopillista sukua koskevat, muutokset ovat tämän tutkimuksen kohteena. Pääpaino on kieliopillisen suvun katoamisella. Muihin siihen liittyviin muutoksiin, kuten sijamuotojärjestelmän uudellenrakentamiseen, viitataan silloin, kuin ne olennaisesti ja erottamattomasti liittyvät kieliopillisessa suvussa tapahtuviin kehitysvaiheisiin.

Lähdemateriaalina on käytetty kolmea tekstiä, jotka ajoittuvat vuosien 1150 ja 1225 väliin. Kaksi näistä teksteistä on pyhimyselämäkertoja, pyhän Margaretan elämäkerrat käsikirjoituksissa MS Cambridge Corpus Christi College 303 ja MS Oxford Bodleian Library Bodley 34. Kolmas teksti on kokoelma lääketieteellisiä reseptejä, Peri Didaxeon (MS British Library Harley 6258b). Näiden tekstien perusteella olen tutkinut kieliopillisen suvun ilmentymiä tällä aikakaudella.

Tutkielman johdannossa esitellään käytetyt käsitteet ja pääasialliset teoriat sekä muinaisenglannin kieliopillinen suku pääpiirteissään. Kappale kaksi käsittelee lähdeaineistoa ja aineistona käytettyjen tekstien historiallista ja tekstuaalista taustaa, sekä aineistossa esiintyvien tekstityyppien piirteitä ja taustaa. Tutkielman kolmannessa kappaleessa aineistoa analysoidaan yksityiskohtaisesti. Analyysin havainnollistamiseksi mm. demonstratiivipronominien sekä eräiden nominien paradigmien on konstruoitu ja esitetty. Analyysiosio on jaettu sanaluokittain. Kappaleessa neljä kieliopillisen suvun katoamista koskevia teorioita on käsitelty ja kommentoitu edellisessä osassa esitetyn analyysin ja aineiston antaman materiaalin perusteella.

Muinaisenglannissa erotettiin kolme sukua; maskuliini, feminiini ja neutri. Nominin taipuivat suvussa, luvussa ja sijassa. Myöhäisessä muinaisenglannissa oli neljä sijamuotoa; nominatiivi, genetiivi, akkusatiivi ja datiivi. Sijapäätteet ja kieliopillisen suvun päätteet olivat usein yhteneviä. Näinollen nominien päätteitä on mahdoton tutkia viittaamatta myös sijamuotojärjestelmään. Sanapäätteiden äänteellisten eroavaisuuksien tasoittumisen mukana ero väheni entisestään, eivätkä uudet yhtenevät päätteet (kuten yksikön genetiivin sekä monikon nominatiivin *-es*) erottaneet eri sukuisia sanoja.

Substantiivien päätteiden lisäksi tutkielmassa käsitellään myös substantiivien määreitä kuten adjektiiveja ja numeraaleja. Erityistä huomiota kiinnitän demonstratiivipronomineihin sekä anaforisiin (persoonä)pronomineihin, joiden muoto jo muinaisenglannissa antoi usein varmemman viitteen sanan kieliopillisesta suvusta kuin sanapäätteet. Etenkin pronomien viittauksellinen merkitys säilyi vielä senkin jälkeen kun kieliopillinen suku olennaisilta osiltaan oli kadonnut englannin kielestä. Nykyenglannissa ero säilyykin enää persoonapronomien muodossa (*he/she/it*). Demonstratiivipronomien ja määräisten artikkeleiden ero ei muinaisenglannissa ollut yhtä selkeä kuin nykyenglannissa. Juuri tällä aikajaksolla esimerkiksi erillinen määräinen artikkeli *þe* ilmaantui kieleen ja muinaisenglannin muodot, maskuliininen *se* ja feminiininen *seo*, katosivat. Tutkielmassa on kiinnitetty huomiota näiden ja muiden demonstratiivipronomien muotojen jakautumiseen ja käyttöön aineiston teksteissä.

Lähdeaineistona käytetyt tekstit tarjoavat tilaisuuden näiden muutosten tutkimiseen niin ajallisesti kuin paikallisesti sekä vertailuun eri tekstityyppien välillä. Tutkimuksessa on hyödynnetty sekä kvantitatiivisia että kvalitatiivisia menetelmiä; etenkin demonstratiivipronomineja/artikkeleita sekä anaforisia persoonapronomineja tutkittaessa. Näiden muotojen jakaantumista on laskettu ja arvioitu. Ilmentymiä on kuitenkin tarkasteltu laajempaan tekstuaaliseen ja historialliseen kontekstiin liitettyinä osina.

Näiden kieliopissa tapahtuneiden muutosten taustalla on useita syitä, jotka kietoutuvat tiiviisti toisiinsa. Useita erilaisia teorioita on esitetty muutoksen syyksi ja taustalla vaikuttaviksi tekijöiksi, taustaksi ja selitykseksi. Tutkielmassa esiteltyjä teorioita on arvioitu lähdeaineiston nojalla. Sekä kielensisäisiä ja kielenulkoisia näkökulmia korostavia teorioita käsitellään. Nk. kielensisäisiä syitä ja selityksiä käsittelevät teoriat sisältävät mm. äännevaihtelun sekä diskursiiviset syyt (kuten

päätteiden uudelleentulkinta). Kielensisäiset teoriat hakevat muutoksille selitystä kielen sisäisestä rakenteesta. Tutkielmassa käsitellään myös kieliopillisen suvun ja sen muutoksen luonnetta valottavia teorioita, kuten maskuliinin tai neutrin korostunutta asemaa (*masculinisation/neuterisation*) tai sanan kieliopillisen suvun muuttumista. Aineisto ei tue teorioita kieliopillisen suvun vaihtumisesta yksittäisissä sanoissa; poikkeustapaukset eivät noudata johdonmukaisesti yhden kieliopillisen suvun mukaisia päätteitä ja määreitä. Monisukuisia (*mixed/multiple gender*) substantiiveja esiintyy myös teksteissä, ja niiden muodot ja määreet ovat usein vaihtelevia. Elollisiin ja elottomiin objekteihin viittaavien substantiivien eroa tarkastellaan myös. Etenkin ihmisiin viittaavat substantiivit saivat usein viittaukseksi sanan luonnollista sukua noudattavia määreitä kieliopillisen suvun sijaan, jos ne olivat ristiriidassa keskenään.

Aineisto sijoittuu noin 75 vuoden pituiselle aikajaksolle. Muutosta näissä teksteissä voi tarkastella joko diakronisena, ajan myötä muuttuvana, tai synkronisena, eri tekstilajien, murteiden tai kielimuotojen välisenä vaihteluna. Muutos on hyvinkin huomattava tekstien välillä, jopa ottaen huomioon tahallisen arkaaisuuden, jolla on pyritty mahdollisimman standardinmukaiseen kielenkäyttöön. Poikkeamat näistä normeista kertovatkin kielen tilanteesta ja kieliopillisen suvun tilasta enemmän kuin kielen (muinaisenglannin) säännönmukainen käyttö.

Kielenulkoiset syyt puolestaan liittyvät niihin vaikuttaviin tekijöihin, jotka johtuvat ulkopuolisista syistä, eivätkä siten liity suoranaisesti kielen sisäiseen rakenteeseen. Kontaktit eri kielten välillä ovat näistä tärkeimpiä. Myös murrekontakteja ja eri murteiden välistä vaihtelua on käsitelty. Aineiston tekstit edustavat kahta eri murrealuetta. Kielenulkoisiin vaikuttajiin voi kuitenkin myös lukea kirjakielen vaikutuksen. Kaikkien kolmen tekstin taustalla on muinaisenglannin standardisoitu kirjakieli (*Late West Saxon*), jonka kieliopilliset käytännöt sekä kaunokirjallisten ja retoristen tehokeinojen vaikutus näkyy aineiston teksteissä. Tässä yhteydessä olen myös käsitellyt personifikaatiota eli personointia, elottomien objektien henkilölistämistä.

Kielikontaktien (latina, ranska ja muinaisnorja) tuodessa englannin kieleen uusia lainasanoja, näiden sanojen merkitys ja suku näissä lainaavissa kielissä on myös mahdollisesti vaikuttanut kotoperäisten sanojen muotoon ja niiden tulkintaan, jolloin sanan kieliopillinen suku on saattanut vaihtua. Latinassa, muinaisranskassa ja muinaisnorjassa oli myös kieliopillinen suku, joka on saattanut vaikuttaa

muinaisenglannin kieliopilliseen järjestelmään. Aineiston teksteissä eri kielten välisten kontaktien vaikutus näkyy vaihtelevasti. Etenkin aineiston lääketieteellisessä tekstissä on runsaasti lainasanoja pääasiassa latinasta mutta myös muinaisranskasta ja kreikasta. Kreolisaatioteoriat, joita on joskus käytetty selittämään kielellisten muutosten laajuutta ja perinpohjaisuutta, olettavat, että näiden kieliopin muutosten taustalla on voimakas ulkopuolinen vaikutus, jonka seurauksena englannista on sanottu kehittyneen kreolikieli, joka pohjautuu joko muinaisranskan kieleen tai muinaisnorjaan. Diskursiivisia syitä painottavat teoriat etsivät selitystä muutoksiin kielen sisäisestä rakenteesta, jolloin kielikontaktien vaikutus olisi ollut edistää muutoksia, joiden alkusyyt ovat löydettävissä kielestä itsestään.

Äänteelliset muutokset (kuten painottomien tavujen vokaalien yhtenäistyminen ja sananloppuisten nasaaliäänteiden katoaminen) voidaan nähdä näiden kieliopillisten muutosten taustalla riippumatta muista esitetyistä syy- ja seuraussuhteista. Aineistossa eri päätteet ovat usein tasoittuneet, joskin tekstien välillä esiintyy huomattavaa vaihtelua. Sananloppuisten tavujen vokaalien yhtenäistyminen on nähtävissä aineiston kaikissa teksteissä. Varhaisimmassa teksteistä suurin osa päätteistä on säilynyt, vaikka vaihtelu onkin huomattavaa. Aineiston myöhäisimmässä tekstissä päätteet ovat tasoittuneet niin, että ainoat mahdolliset päätteet ovat *-e*, *en(e)* ja *-es*. Samankaltainen kehitys on nähtävissä demonstratiivipronomineissa.

Tutkimuksen perusteella väliaikainen kielellinen tai kieliopillinen järjestelmä (*temporary subsystem*) on mahdollinen. Tällöin jäljelläolevat päätteet ja muodot on tulkittu merkitsemään sijamuotoja ja osa muodoista on saanut merkityksellisiä eroja (esim. *se*, *seo* ja yleinen *pe*). Kieliopillinen suku on vaiheittaisesti hävinnyt kielestä. Jäljellejääneiden muotojen on voitu tulkita merkitsevän ainoastaan sijamuotoja ja eroa luvussa erisukuisten sanojen erottamisen sijaan.

Tekstilajin tai genren vaikutusta kielioppiin on myös arvioitu tutkielmassa. Aineisto edustaa kahta erilaista genreä. Pyhimyselämänkertojen voi sanoa olevan sidottuja tekstilajinsa asettamiin muotoihin ja vaatimuksiin ja ne noudattelevat usein tiettyjä kirjallisia kaavoja sekä muodollisesti että kielellisesti. Lääketieteellisten tai tieteellisten tekstien, jotka ovat asiapitoisempia kuin kaunokirjallisemmat pyhimyselämänkerrat, puolestaan on sanottu olevan innovatiivisempia luonteeltaan. Aineiston molemmat pyhimyselämänkerrat ovat kielellisesti ja etenkin kieliopillisen suvun suhteen

johdonmukaisempia kuin aineiston lääketieteellinen teksti, jossa muinaisenglannin muodot sekoittuvat uudempien innovatiivisten muotojen kanssa. Molempien pyhimyselämäkertojen johdonmukaisuuden verrattuna aineiston lääketieteelliseen tekstiin voidaan katsoa osoittavan eroja eri tekstilajien välillä. Nämä erot eivät kuitenkaan ole suoraviivaisesti edusta jakoa konservatiivisen ja innovatiivisen tekstilajin välillä, sillä aineiston lääketieteellinen teksti on kielellisesti konservatiivisempi kuin aineiston 1200-luvulta peräisin oleva pyhimyselämäkerta.

Laajempi vertailu eri tekstilajien välillä saattaisi osoittaa eroja, jotka tässä tutkielmassa käytetyn aineiston perusteella saattavat johtua joko tekstilajista tai murrealueesta. Aineiston teksteistä varhaisin, pyhimyselämäkerta, säilyttää kieliopillisen suvun pääosin niin nominien päätteissä kuin demonstratiivipronomineissakin. Anaforiset pronominit viittaavat useimmiten elollisiin olentoihin, jolloin ne noudattavat substantiivin luonnollista enemmän kuin kieliopillista sukua. Myöhemmässä pyhimyselämäkerrassa kieliopillinen suku on lähes kokonaan hävinnyt nominien päätteistä, joissa erillisillä sanapäätteillä erotetaan vain monikko sekä yksikön ja monikon genetiivi. Demonstratiivipronomineissa kieliopillista sukua erottavat muodot säilyvät joissakin erityistapauksissa, kuten substantiivien *worulde* 'maailma' ja *eorðe* 'maa' yhteydessä. Molemmat sanat ovat kieliopilliselta suvultaan muinaisenglannissa feminiinejä. Myös anaforisissa viittauksissa feminiinipronomineja käytetään viittaamaan eräisiin sanoihin, vaikka yleisin viittauksellinen pronomini elottomiin olentoihin viitatessa onkin (neutri) *hit* 'se'. Näissä poikkeustapauksissa on yleensä kyse personoinnista tai personifikaatiosta; elottomille objekteille (tai käsitteille) annetaan inhimillisiä piirteitä, jolloin kyseessä ei suoranaisesti ole kieliopillisen suvin säilyminen. Esimerkiksi sana *sawle* 'sielu' on muinaisenglantilaiselta suvultaan feminiini, kun taas *crune* 'kruunu' on maskuliini. Aineiston lääketieteellinen teksti sijoittuu näiden kahden pyhimyselämäkerran väliin, sekä ajallisesti että kieliopillisen suvun säilymisen suhteen. Tekstissä käytetään muinaisenglannin normien mukaisten muotojen rinnalla uusia, innovatiivisia muotoja. Sekä nominien että määreiden muodossa on huomattavaa vaihtelua, vaikka valtaosa muodoista noudattaakin muinaisenglannin normeja.

Järjestelmän epävakaudesta ja vaihtelusta kertovat kuitenkin samassa asemassa ja jopa peräkkäin olevien lausekkeiden nominipäätteiden vaihtelu. Yksittäinen nomini

saattaa saada kolmekin erilaista päätettä eri kohdissa tekstiä. Vaihtelu on erityisen selkeää aineiston lääketieteellisessä tekstissä. Vaikka vaihtelua esiintyy myös molemmissa pyhimyselämäntarinoissa, ne ovat kielellisesti yhtenäisempiä.